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# Record of Christian Work

East Northfield, Massachusetts.

VOL. 42. OCTOBER, 1923. NO. 10.

**Whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be saved.**—*Acts 2. 21.*

## PRESIDENT WARREN GAMALIEL HARDING.

It is agreed that no preceding president, perhaps no prominent statesman in this nation, has declared his personal allegiance to Jesus Christ so outspokenly in public address as President Harding. It happens that the last of his addresses shows the earnestness and reality of his religion in no uncertain terms. His voice was heard by proxy a few hours after his death, when his secretary, Mr. Christian, read a speech he had prepared and planned to deliver at a function of the Knights Templar in Hollywood, California. The whole address is serious, and the following words, founded upon the significance of a banner, —called after the fashion of the Crusaders a beausant,—which was presented to the lodge by Mr. Christian in connection with the ceremony, reveal Mr. Harding's heart:

"I am sure the mission of the beausant will be a failure if its travels are made simply a matter of symbolism and pageantry. It bears emblazoned upon it the supplication, 'Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name be the glory!' We should glorify this holy name not by words, not by praise, not by displays at arms, but by deeds and service in behalf of human brotherhood. Christ, the great exemplar of our order, repeatedly urged this truth upon his hearers. There was nothing mythical or mystical in the code of living preached by Jesus Christ. The lessons he taught were so simple and plain, so fashioned to be marked by the humblest among men, that they appealed to the reason and emotions of all. His words to the fishermen bore conviction to the learned men of the Roman bench. All of his teachings were based upon the broad ground of fraternalism and justice and understanding, from which flows always peace. 'A new commandment I give unto you—that ye love one another.' Surely in this was all the law and the gospel."

## AN IMPROMPTU TRIBUTE

Upon the announcement of the death of President Harding, at the Northfield General Conference, by

### Rev. John A. Hutton, D. D., of London.

Face to face with the really great things of life, God has imposed upon us a certain silence. But I know that I should not be representing the feelings of my own people if I allowed this time to pass without some explicit word.

I need not assure you who know me in what high regard I hold this country, and with what reverence and respect we Britishers are always prepared to acquit ourselves towards its chief executive. It has not been a hard thing for us to do this, because by a singular good fortune you of the United States have always been led to choose a man whom it was easy to honor.

President Harding has been no exception to that great rule. Called to office at a time of extraordinary difficulty and delicacy, I think you are to estimate the greatness of his achievement by contrasting what he has been able to do with what a less competent and good man might have done. Called to office at a time of great international stress and world disillusionment, one who might have appeared more robust and aggressive, but who in fact would have been more mischievous, might have added sorrows to the world, from which it would only with difficulty have recovered. It is a monument to the real goodness, perhaps even to the greatness, of the man that he has been able to represent you so well in these most difficult days. However slow it may seem to us, the tide of geniality and goodwill is returning to the world. It is returning, and President Harding has done nothing to restrain it.

May I recall to you that classical story from our history and from a speech of one whose name, I trust, will always be held in great honor by America, for he was the one who delivered perhaps the greatest speech since Demosthenes in favor of your freedom, the mighty Edmund Burke? In the midst of a fiery political conflict at Bristol a letter was handed to Edmund Burke as he stood on the hustings addressing his constituents. The letter conveyed to him the intelligence that his political opponent had suddenly died. Whereupon that great man, who had always access to such perfect expression of himself, said these words:

"What shadows we are, and what shadows we pursue!"

I can assure you, my dear friends, that throughout the British Empire at this moment flags will be halfmast high. And that will be no empty or idle symbol, but the expression that all the lights in thoughtful minds are lowered, and that we are aware of the passing of a great figure from the stage.

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## RELIGIOUS THOUGHT AND ACTIVITY.

The Presbyterian churches (North) increased their **foreign mission gifts** 43 per cent between 1913 and 1919, and 100 per cent between 1919 and 1921.

A campaign of evangelism was launched at the Christian Endeavor Convention at Des Moines, to cover a period of two years and to be known as **"The Friends of Christ Movement."**

While the per capita **consumption of opium derivatives** in China is two grains, the figure for America is 36, for India 27, for France 4, for Great Britain 3, for Germany 2, and for Italy 1. America's consumption has trebled in two years.

At the meeting of the National Council of Congregational Churches in Springfield, Mass., October 16-23, the **Congregational Church Building Society** will report the most prosperous two years in its history. This society is doing the work of a great construction company, for every week in the year it helps build two churches, and every

ten days of the year it helps complete a parsonage.

The society reports receipts of $1,220,000. This money has been used in completing 305 buildings for religious purposes, located in villages, towns and cities in all parts of the country.

**"The Church and Public Recreation"** will be an important topic at the Recreation Congress, October 8-12, at Springfield, the state capital of Illinois, according to the announcement of the Playground and Recreation Association of America.

In addition to the discussion concerning the church and recreation there will be addresses on many other topics, including home play, small town and open country recreation, athletics for girls and women, recreation for colored people, adult recreation, summer camps.

The National Board of the Y. W. C. A. is building **a Studio Club at Hollywood,** to try to take care of the swarms of film-struck girls who flock thither in order to break into the movie profession. Few of these can get a job, and many get stranded.

The new building will have a hundred rooms where girls can be accommodated until they are placed in positions or sent home.

Will H. Hays endorses the project, and raised $120,000 on its behalf from the leading motion picture producers. Mrs. Edward M. Townsend of the Y National Board says:

"The most cordial relations have existed from the beginning between the club and the studios, and when Mr. Hays remarked at a luncheon last spring that he considered the club 'Exhibit A' in his plans for the welfare of those working in the motion picture industry I feel that he was, in a measure, expressing in words what the producers themselves have so often expressed in other ways. I think they feel that the club is doing a valuable piece of work in removing from the public mind unpleasant impressions, frequently ill-founded, of the life led by the young actresses of Hollywood."

Bishop Schrembs of Cleveland is at the head of the Roman Catholic church's official direction of work by lay people of his church. In calling conferences of such people in the Cleveland diocese he gives suggestions to the Catholic laity of the country. Officially this laity is being organized into councils of Catholic men and councils of Catholic women. Social service has formed much of the activity of these councils so far, but Bishop Schrembs recommends to Catholics in future several additional aims.

President Calvin Coolidge

as photoed by newspaper men at the White House. Copyright by Worldwide Photos, N. Y.

"Why waste time lamenting acts of enemies?" asks the bishop. "Let us rather build up the church." He recounts the fact that in Connecticut, New York, Ohio and Illinois, as perhaps leading other dioceses, Catholic churches that are small are favored and established as far as possible today, rather than the great edifices favored thirty years ago. The new plan now is for each priest to have his own church and congregation. Bishop Schrembs wonders why the laity cannot assist in **founding small churches** on the fringes of present large parishes in growing cities.

He deprecates giving attention to hooded law-breakers, as he calls them, calls for the defense of Catholics as individuals and as a church, and appeals to Catholic men and women of the country

to cultivate inherited or acquired ability to lead others.

We have grown so familiar with the cry of the failure of the church that it is interesting to learn some facts which have just come to light with regard to the **progress of the Anglican church** in the British Dominions beyond the seas.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics has published the results of the religious census in the Commonwealth for the year 1921. The figures disclose the cheering fact that Anglican church membership during the decade increased by well over 600,000, the total being some 2,300,000, which represents 44 per cent of the total population. Ten years ago the proportion was 38 per cent. This increase is considerably in excess of the natural growth, and points to the fact that members are passing over from other denominations.

The figures for Canada have also been issued by the Dominion government. Out of a population of almost nine millions the Anglicans number 1,400,000. This represents 16.02 of the total population, as against 14.47 in 1911. But although these figures show that the Anglican church is comparatively small, yet the percentage of gain is higher than among any other religious denomination.

An Australian writer, commenting upon the figures, which have produced something in the nature of a surprise, is disposed to account for this growth by the rapid development of modernism among the ministers of non-Anglican bodies, while another is probably right in declaring the emphasis laid by the Anglican church upon the obligation of divine worship, and the authority and traditions of historic Christianity, account for her remarkable increase. —"Church of Ireland Gazette."

The secretaries of the International Missionary Council have issued a statement regarding the figures they were instructed to collect regarding the average aggregate **contributions of the chief countries of the world toward Protestant foreign missions.** The total, based on a three years' average and on the exchange rate of December 30, 1922, amounts to the sum of £9,594,254, or about the cost of one and a half dreadnoughts, and is made up of the following national contributions:

| | |
|---|---|
| U. S. A. and Canada ... | £6,327,597 |
| Great Britain ..... | 2,310,000 |
| Sweden ..... | 280,926 |
| Australia ..... | 172,436 |
| Norway ..... | 163,000 |
| Denmark ..... | 91,715 |
| Netherlands ..... | 84,922 |
| South Africa ..... | 69,750 |
| Switzerland ..... | 53,818 |
| France ..... | 21,700 |
| Finland ..... | 17,550 |
| Germany ..... | 430 |
| Belgium ..... | 408 |

The last few figures are particularly noteworthy as showing the contributions of the Roman Catholic countries of France and Belgium to Protestant missions, and how, owing to the tremendous fall in the German mark, Germany is practically unable to support any foreign mission work, despite the fact that in marks her contribution was Mk.13,797,558. Before the war Germany was a close rival of Great Britain and the United States in her contributions to foreign missionary work.

### Hebrew Literature.

The library of the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York became the greatest Hebrew library in the world with the acquisition of the Elkan Nathan Adler collection, from London.

This collection comprises more than 40,000 printed volumes and parts of volumes, and more than 4000 manuscripts, and was the greatest private Hebrew library known to exist. It includes several thousand unique volumes and manuscripts dating from the ninth century to the present, and produced in every country of Europe and Asia, and in many of those of Africa and the new world.

The whole collection has scarcely been touched by scholars. Thousands of the books have not been read in modern times. The superficial work which has been done on the collection as Adler put it together shows that it will throw light on every phase of civilization in Europe from the rise of Mohammedan civilization, and perhaps earlier, down almost to the present.

The worldwide distribution of Jewish communities interlaced their culture with that of practically every civilized or semi-civilized nation, and this vast encyclopedia

of their writings over ten centuries and in every part of the world forms a magnificent treasury of historical sources.

With the acquisition of the Adler collection the Jewish Theological Seminary will have a total of about 80,000 Hebrew books, about 6000 manuscripts, and over 100 incunabula. The oldest fragment is dated in the 7th century.

The seminary sought also to buy the great private collection of Baron Ginsberg at St. Petersburg, which was particularly rich in ancient Jewish manuscripts, but this has been hidden or destroyed, and no trace of its fate since the revolution in Russia could be obtained.

### Keeping Fit.

Ever since the war prize-fighting has been popular, and never in all its history has it been such a money-making proposition for pugilistic stars. One aspect of the "profession" is brought out in the "New York Tribune" by Grantland Rice, a sporting editor, in the following story.

When we asked Tom Gibbons out at Shelby to outline his training diet the first thing he said was this:

"Well, I drink a lot of water,—

"No tea or coffee, no tobacco, milk now and then, simple food,—steaks, chops, eggs, potatoes, etc.,—and a lot of water."

We asked Dempsey the same question.

Curiously enough, he began his answer in the same fashion:

"Well, I drink a lot of water,—

"A little tea or coffee,—not too much,—no tobacco, simple food, and what 'Doc' Kearns calls the 'swill dishes,'—fattening dishes, that keep me from taking off too much weight."

So a "lot of water" seems to be the basis for physical conditioning.

A "lot of water" is a great thing for the stomach and the system in general, and yet not many ever follow this program.

The average citizen drinks water only when he is thirsty,—not at regular intervals for the practical purpose of keeping fit.

No sermon is intended, but a "lot of water" for health-making purposes has it all over a lot of wine, a lot of beer, a lot of coffee or a lot of tea. Also a lot of etherized gin or doctored hootch.

The kick may be missing,—and yet there is a certain amount of fun in being healthy, in feeling fit, as against an ulcerized stomach lining or next day's vast depression.

Those desiring to know the type of life Jack Dempsey lives don't have to gather their information from gossip. They can make their own deductions.

Dempsey hadn't fought for two years. He had trained only about three weeks for his Gibbons fight. Yet at the end of fifteen fast rounds, where he was working without rest to puncture Gibbons's amazing defense, the champion looked faster and fresher than he looked in the first round.

And fifteen rounds under a broiling sun isn't the gentlest test in the world.

He was constantly on the move, incessantly whaling away with one hand or the other, yet there wasn't a minute of the route where he showed the slightest sign of weariness or seemed to be resting up for a new assault.

If that isn't fit condition, we have no idea what fit condition is.

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## THE BIBLE IN THE SCHOOLS.

A bulletin of the Bureau of Education in Washington sums up the legal status and current practice of using the Bible in public schools.

The discussion dates back to Colonial days, and occasionally flames up when some untoward event focuses attention upon it. Two years ago the State of Washington was the scene of a battle between the pros and cons, and during the last year California has been the center of a controversy as to whether or not the King James version is a "sectarian" book which should be barred from the schools.

There are, all told, ten states where the Bible may not be used in schools. With the exception of New York and Louisiana, all are in the West. Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, Arizona, Nevada, Wyoming, Idaho and Washington forbid it. If California, where the matter is still undecided, finally joins the ranks, Oregon and Utah alone of the Mountain and Pacific Coast states will permit the use of the Bible.

As the West is the home of the exclusionists, so the East and the South divide the states in which the reading of the Bible in public schools is compulsory.

Massachusetts leads the way, although desperate efforts have been made here from time to time to prevent the practice. Pennsylvania and New Jersey also provide for it. Three Southern states, Tennessee, Georgia and Alabama, bring the total of compulsory states up to six. In eleven more Bible reading is specifically permitted, and in nineteen the laws are silent on the subject. In the last group the common practice, especially in the South and in New England, is to read passages from the Bible in most schools. The line-up therefore is, broadly speaking, the old East and South against the newer West.

Whenever special attempts have been made to prevent the use of the Bible the controversy has largely hinged upon the meaning of the word "sectarian." The bureau's investigation shows that various states have constitutional or statutory provisions forbidding sectarian instruction. The purpose appears to have been a desire to check strictly denominational instruction, but these restrictions have furnished the basis for the claim that the Bible is in itself a sectarian work. This claim when submitted to the Supreme Courts in three different states was differently interpreted. Illinois upheld the sectarian theory, while Kentucky and Texas denied it.

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## TOBACCO AND MENTAL EFFICIENCY.

Does the use of tobacco handicap or does it help men and women engaged in intellectual pursuits? Has it aided the superior men to attain superiority, or has it retarded them from larger accomplishments? Has it been a factor in keeping inferior men inferior? Is the use of tobacco increasing among high school and college youth, and with what effects? Does it strengthen or weaken creative ability? Does it improve or injure judgment?

The results of a scientific research into the tobacco question, just published, give a mass of data bearing upon such queries as these.*

The search was organized in 1918 under a committee of some 60 distinguished professional and business men, strictly impartial, all they wanted being the truth. In this particular volume the only aspect of the question dealt with is the relation of tobacco to mental efficiency. The use of tobacco by women was not investigated. The inquiry was conducted by cold professors, whose reputation was of course at stake. What were their findings?

In a word, as much is to be said for as against tobacco in every direction except in the case of youth of high school and college age. Here it is pretty well agreed that tobacco is a detriment to scholarship, whether by direct drug effect or by inducing habits of loafing and laziness.

Part I gives data derived from observation, introspection and biography. The conflicting opinions and habits of great men, dead and living, balance each other.

Part II records in detail a mass of results secured with the assistance of school and college faculties. In the high school tobacco "is either directly or indirectly playing a tragic rôle."

Part III takes us into the laboratory, where rigid tests of the effects of tobacco upon certain physiological and motor and intellectual processes were made, photos of the instruments being reproduced.

With the accelerating increase in the use of tobacco since 1910 it is bound to become a menace, no longer a fad or a harmless habit. The personal consumption of tobacco in the United States has risen from 1.8 lbs. per capita in the years following the Civil War to nearly 7 lbs. per capita at the end of the world war. The production of cigarettes increased from 3½ billions in 1905 to 46 billions in 1918: what is it today? We are now estimated to spend $1,600,000,000 a year on tobacco, not including that spent on accessories like matches and pipes, and not counting the fire loss, of which tobacco is now recognized to be the leading cause.

The 16th century saw sexual looseness as the leading sin of society. Liquor and profanity were the curses of the 18th century. Tobacco seems to be leading the race in the 20th century.

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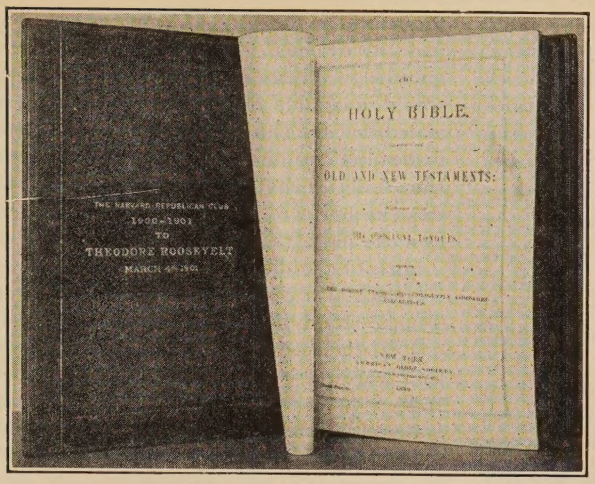
God is the only real center, and separation from him is the only real schism.—Thomas Erskine.

* **Tobacco and Mental Efficiency**, by M. V. O'Shea, Professor of Education, University of Wisconsin. Macmillan Co., New York. 258 pages. $2.50.




The Bible which President Roosevelt always kept at his hand on the reading stand in the north room at Sagamore Hill.

What striking testimony is borne to Colonel Roosevelt's interest in the Bible when a political club chooses and presents one to mark his induction into high office!

(By courtesy of the American Bible Society.)

## PLANS AND SUGGESTIONS.

Beloved, let not either the fear of thorns, or the stony rocks, or the hardness of the road, terrify us, so long as in **our sowing of the Word of God** we arrive at last at the good ground! Let the Word of God be received by every field, by every man, whether barren or fertile!—St. Augustine.

From an exchange we learn that the old children's hymn beginning, **"I am so glad that our Father in heaven,"** can be sung to the tune of the Glory Song. The chorus may be altered to

Jesus loves me! Jesus loves me!
Jesus loves me! Jesus loves me!
This shall my song in eternity be,
Oh what a wonder that Jesus loves me!

**"Looking Where They're Going"** is the title of a London mission annual report. The title was suggested by a picture in "Punch" which shows a child stumbling over a stone in the roadway. Hurt and surprized he looks up at his mother, and says:

"Mummy, why don't you look where I'm going?"

Henry Ward Beecher addressed the Boston theological students once, and invited questions after the address.

One student asked: "Mr. Beecher, would you not advise a young preacher to prepare a few **scientific and literary lectures?"**

Beecher's reply was: "Why do you want two nozzles to your hydrant when you have water enough for only one?"

Rev. Percival H. Barker, pastor of the Point Breeze Presbyterian church, Pittsburgh, has been **broadcasting his sermons** for more than two years through the Westinghouse Company. During that time the congregation has grown rapidly. Five hundred and thirty-six new members have been added, and the church budget has been increased from $18,000 to $46,000. The pastor's salary was recently increased $1700 a year, and the congregation is now building a parsonage.

**The Guild of Talents** is an opportunity created by the Regions Beyond Missionary Union for those who, while desiring to help the missionary cause, are unable to do so immediately owing to lack of funds, or who cannot do as much as they would like. They promise by the use of some talent to earn at least £1. 0. 0 a year for the work of the R. B. M. U. Suggestions are given to suit various capabilities.

The Guild was inaugurated in 1922. The first year it yielded £132.

Rev. Thomas Watkins of the Presbyterian Church of Delaware, Ohio, has found a way to keep his **college young people in close and friendly contact with their church.** He shows his sympathy for the ambition of young people as they go to college or as they come home with their diplomas, and in a new and effective way brings home to them the claims of the spiritual life.

A few Sundays ago, at the morning service of his church, four college graduates

and seven high school graduates were honored with a special service, in which each received a copy of Weymouth's "New Testament in Modern Speech," on behalf of the church. It is safe to say that these young folks will read those Testaments, and the fresh, vivid, twentieth century language of this version will bring home to them with new winsomeness and power the glory and the urgency of the call of Christ.

In historic John Street Methodist Church in lower New York the mother church of American Methodism, noonday services are held with success, but a new feature has been added. Distinguished speakers occupy the pulpit, many of them laymen, and volunteers who are promoting certain welfare causes, such as arbitration in business, prison reform, improvement in police administration, and getting voters to vote on election days. After the address people are asked to stand as a pledge that they will tell to other people during the succeeding four or five days one fact the speaker told them, and returning on other days report how many persons they told.

Like the noonday church, the **go-and-tell plan** is working out. At a recent meeting in John Street Church the police commissioner of New York spoke, and asked those present to tell other men about a National Police Bureau which police departments of the country are trying to induce Congress to establish at Washington. One hundred and twenty-four men rose to their feet and pledged to do so.

### Home-Coming Prayer Meeting Night.

A prayer meeting with the above designation was recently held at Temple Church, Philadelphia.

The church membership had been divided into sections, and each deacon had been assigned to a certain number of members. Notices were sent out to the members in each group by the deacon having charge of that group, urging attendance on this important occasion. It was an old time prayer meeting with about 1000 people.

Dr. Russell H. Conwell spoke of the importance and value of having many friends, and stated that in all his long career he never knew of a single instance, of all the thousands who have come to him for assistance in the way of employment, that had any friends. Whenever he asked the question, "Where are your friends?" they would invariably reply, "I haven't any." He stated that the church is the proper place to make lifelong friends, and that no one should let such an important occasion as this slip by to renew old acquaintances and to make new friends.

Each of the deacons was assigned to take his place at a certain location in the Lower Temple where the prayer meeting was held, and all the members belonging to his division were there to meet each other and become acquainted. Some of the deacons had quite a job getting their delegation together, but, all in all, it worked out very nicely.

### A Tithers' Trust.

A Sunday school addition to a village church in New York state became a necessity. The architects said it would cost at least $20,000 to erect the building needed. How could a small church, without wealth, finance such a project?

At a conference the superintendent sugested that if those interested would tithe their incomes it could be done. This unexpected suggestion was taken up on a two-year basis, and a Tithers' Trust, modelled on the plan of a trust company, was formed.

The pastor, Rev. Albert Clarke Wyckoff, reports that the new building is now almost completed, at a cost of about $40,000. All but $10,000 of this is in hand.

"During the period of effort the yearly budget for congregational expenses, which has greatly increased, has been easily met; the church has held its place on the honor roll of General Synod as one of the few which have met their full Progress Campaign quotas, which, including the Ministerial Pension Fund apportionment, has raised its benevolences from $500 to $1680; and it has also given more generously to other outside charities than ever before in its history. The Tithers' Trust, which wrought this miracle in finance, has been in existence three years and a half, and is thriving. The happiest Christians in the church are its members. We have discovered that tithing is not a matter of income, but of interest."

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Though the sun of charity arise at home, it should always set abroad.

## OTHER LANDS.

**The Archbishop of Canterbury has no** intention of relaxing his hold on the doctrines of the Reformation. "The doctrines we stand by in the church we love, a church catholic and reformed, are a sacred heritage. We mean that heritage to be safe, please God, in our keeping!"

The rector and professors of the Pontifical Bible Institute in Rome, with the assistance of other scholars and with the Pope's sanction and blessing, have been engaged since 1921 in making **a new translation of the Bible from the original texts into Italian.** The first volume of this new translation, the Pentateuch, is now issued. It is published in Milan by the Society of Life and Thought (Vita e Pensiero).

This version is printed without the Latin text of the Vulgate. The notes are not polemical.

**The new Constitution of Egypt** generously safeguards such religious liberty as now exists. While Article 149 states that Islam is the religion of the state and Arabic is its official language, we find the following:

Article 12. Liberty of conscience is absolute.

Article 13. The state protects, in harmony with usages established in Egypt, the free exercise of any religion or faith, on condition that it is not contrary to public order or good morals.

Article 16. No restriction will be imposed on the free use of any language in private relations, in trade, in religious affairs, in the press or in publications of any sort, as well as in public gatherings.

**The growth of circulation of the Scriptures in Italy** has been marked of recent years.

This is partly credited to the zeal and ability of agents and others. Another factor to be taken into consideration is the fresh interest in religion. Among Italians there is a widespread dissatisfaction with the anti-religious sentiments hitherto prevailing among them. Italians say that the Fascist movement is more than political, it is religious. Still another contributing cause is undoubtedly the publication of Giovanni Papini's "Story of Christ." It has inevitably led people to read the Gospels for themselves.

An interesting statement has come from a parliamentary committee of Great Britain, which has recently been **investigating English prisons** for the purpose of finding what denominations are represented there. The prisons investigated represented a population of 100,000 persons, men and women.

The investigators made the following discoveries:

Salvation Army, two; Congregationalists, three; Baptists, nine; Methodists, ten; Presbyterians, forty-six; Church of England, 118; Roman Catholic, 247.

These figures, of course, cast no reflection on the teachings of the various communions, but it is deserving of note that the Salvation Army, though recruited from the lower classes, and having in its ranks many who were once desperate characters, was found to have only two of its members in prison.

For over thirty years there has been a branch of the **Woman's Christian Temperance Union in Cairo, Egypt,** under the care of Miss Anna Y. Thompson. However, an Egyptian branch had its beginning in the autumn of 1921, when one of the most earnest Christian Egyptian women, who is interested in all that is best for her country, opened her beautiful home for a meeting of the W. C. T. U., and invited a number of her Egyptian friends to attend. Among her guests were women of high Moslem rank, some Coptic women, and a number of missionaries. The afternoon's program included a paper by the hostess on the present social conditions of the large cities of Egypt. One of the missionaries spoke on the influence of the home upon the formation of the character of the children of the family, and another gave a sketch of the life of Frances E. Willard.

The membership at present is fifty-eight, and the women are truly interested.

The culmination of the past winter's

work of this Egyptian branch of the W. C. T. U. has been the circulating of a big petition for prohibition from Alexandria to Assuan, covering all the territory between, even to the small villages.

An unusual discussion took place at the annual meeting of the Evangelical Alliance in London last June, when the chairman seemed to disagree with a Spanish speaker who laid stress on the continued Roman Catholic intolerance in his native land.

The freedom given to Evangelicals in **Spain** is in advance of legal freedom, but even now they are deprived of rights we consider elementary. Their churches cannot hold property, their children, if baptized in the Roman church and dying before they reach the age of 14, are buried by the Roman church. Protestants who become elementary school teachers must learn and teach the Roman Catholic catechism. Evangelical soldiers are compelled to reverence the Host, marriages very often are delayed for many months, sometimes for years, by Roman Catholic priests who will not furnish the necessary documents, and attacks made on colporters are ignored by local authorities. Spanish Evangelicals exist on sufferance. They desire to have their status acknowledged as good citizens by law. The state is willing to grant their petition, but the Roman church blocks the way to Spain acknowledging Spanish Evangelicals as possessors of equal rights with their fellow citizens.

Separation of church and state in **Turkey** affords one of the significant examples of the real reforms attempted by the Turkish government, reports Olin P. Lee, recently senior secretary in charge of Y. M. C. A. work at Adana, Asia Minor. Mr. Lee returned to this country after closing the station at Adana, which latterly became the center of a great work of relief for fugitives.

"The change effected will in time have far-reaching consequences," says the secretary. "One of the new measures, I am told, requires that all boys who are being educated as hojan (Moslem religious teachers) must have their early training in the secular schools maintained by the government. After so many years in these schools they will enter the religious schools. Heretofore candidates for the priesthood have taken their entire education in the religious schools. If this reform is carried out, it cannot help but have a liberalizing influence in time.

"The better class of Turkish leaders is decidedly limited. There are not enough to go around. The opposition to even such changes as that proposed is formidable. One of the reasons for the great interest taken by the present government in orphanages for Turkish orphans is that they rely on these orphanages in another generation to furnish a crop of recruits for the progressive element."

The second continental conference of the Eastern section of the **Presbyterian Alliance** brought together a hundred and twenty delegates from about 40 churches at Zurich. The main business was the hearing of reports from continental churches. Three leading features of the situation were made plain.

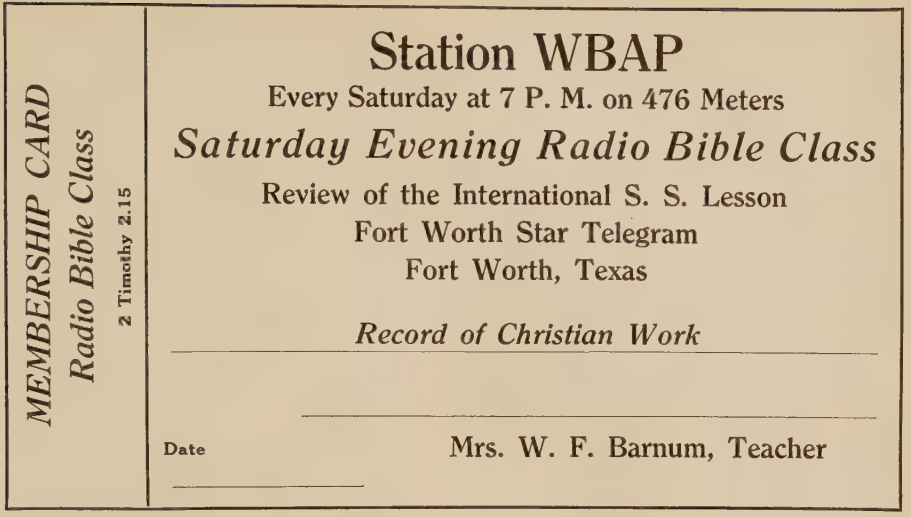
The first is the serious and sometimes cruel disabilities to which, under the new political conditions, some of the Protestant minorities are subjected. The Treaty of Versailles tore in two the great Calvinistic church of Hungary, one-half of which is now subject to Roumania.

The second is that from all directions comes evidence of new and skilfully directed activity on the part of the Roman Catholic church. Every conceivable means is being employed to thwart, injure or destroy the work of Protestant churches. Many Catholics are speaking freely and hopefully of another Counter-Reformation, and not a little of the political and social pressure which is being felt by Protestants in Europe is felt to be due to the hidden hand of the Vatican.

This leads, thirdly, to a new recognition of the necessity that the Protestant churches should present a united front, and, further to a feeling that the difficulty here is not so great as it once appeared. There are signs of rapprochement everywhere, and even the Reformed and the Lutheran types of Protestantism are holding out hands to one another.

### Protestantism in Ireland.

A reliable firsthand clue to the inward


MEMBERSHIP CARD
Radio Bible Class
2 Timothy 2.15
Station WBAP
Every Saturday at 7 P. M. on 476 Meters
Saturday Evening Radio Bible Class
Review of the International S. S. Lesson
Fort Worth Star Telegram
Fort Worth, Texas
Record of Christian Work
Date
Mrs. W. F. Barnum, Teacher

Membership card in a Radio Bible class conducted by one of our subscribers in Fort Worth, Texas.

condition of Roman Catholicism in Ireland and also to its social relation to Protestantism may be obtained from the 74th annual Report (1922-23) of the Society for Irish Church Missions to the Roman Catholics, with which is incorporated the Scripture Readers' Society and the Irish Society. This society dates back to 1846, when the earnest effort began to be undertaken to promote Reformation principles in Ireland, largely through the distribution of the Scriptures. Work is carried on in English and Irish. It is regarded as a link between the Episcopal churches in Ireland and England, to the latter of which it looks for a large share of comfort and support.

Last year's report is distinctly optimistic on the whole. Little space is given to a mere mention of the terrible disorder that existed in the Free State, where, however, an orphanage and a church and schoolhouse plant were deliberately burnt, and a dispensary and another house were damaged. None of the agents of the society were hurt.

Of the seven departments, the oldest branch of the work is the Irish Society; it is also the most restricted by reason of the conditions prevailing in the South and West. It has not been possible, in most cases, to carry out the usual examination of the pupils who are reading the Bible in Irish. There are about 650 pupils at present under instruction. "During the year one of our pupils who had been passed as efficient in the knowledge of Irish, and who had learned large portions of the Irish Bible and could repeat many long passages by heart, was seized by Irregular Forces, taken to the little schoolhouse where he had learned to read the Irish Bible, and immediately in front of it riddled with bullets. In the same district another pupil who was attending our classes, and had made considerable progress, suffered a similar fate."

A wave of revival blessing swept over the North of Ireland, and the agents of the Scripture Readers' Society were happily engaged in helping to shepherd the results. Hundreds of men and women have been raised to newness of life, and the Scripture readers who work amongst them are warmly appreciated by the rectors who superintend their labors.

Six colporters were at work during the year, and in spite of troubled times a decided increase in colportage sales is reported. The figures for the year are:

To Roman Catholics: 21 Bibles, 1186 New Testaments, 7022 Portions, 1484 other books;

To Protestants: 9 Bibles, 546 New Testaments, 456 Portions, 1878 other books;

Making a grand total of 12,602, as against 9362 in the previous year.

This increase (3240) in sales is the more remarkable when it is borne in mind that large tracts of country were inaccessible, owing to the blowing up of bridges and the roving bands of gunmen who made free passage impossible. Colporters did an intensive work in the districts that were available. The tendency to withdraw from mass and all religious services is becoming increasingly manifest in certain parts of the country. Colporters are supplying the disillusioned with the Word of God, and encouraging them to read it for themselves.

In addition to this, 31 fairs and markets were visited, and 4531 books, including Bibles, Testaments, hymnals, prayer books, and Psalters, were sold, as well as 1061 text-cards.

"The I.C.M. will never rest content till every Irishman can read in his own book in his own house the wonderful words of life. Every moment is precious, and every help is welcome."

### Lutherans in Conference.

NATHAN R. MELHORN, D. D.

Lutheran leaders of many nations assembled in a world convention at the village of Eisenach, Saxony, in August. Delegates came from 20 countries, of which 17 were European, the United States, Canada and Australia making up the total.

The Lutheran church numbers about 75,000,000 souls, being the largest section of Protestant Christianity. Its distinctive confession of faith was drafted at Augsburg in 1530. This oldest Protestant creed, together with "Luther's Catechism," is universally adopted by all branches of Lutheranism, but until recently the denomination was largely divided by lines of nationality, commonly being a state church or closely affiliated with governmental authority. America and Canada are exceptions to this rule, the 3,500,000 Lutherans of the western continent being congregational in their form of organization. But in Europe, where the rule since 1555 has obtained that the religion of the prince is the religion of the people, state ties have been altered only recently. Language and tradition are still strong group bonds. Some people would consider nationalism supreme. It is very significant therefore to find those of illy adjusted countries willing to waive their political and economic differences. This determination to discuss religion and church life, letting everything else lie on the table, was the striking feature of the Lutherans' plan for their World Convention.

The unparalleled hardships war and peace brought upon the masses of Europe impelled the Lutherans of the world to flock together. They ascribe to the Shepherd of souls their agreement to hold for the first time a convention that was world-wide. All these leaders endured the hardships of the past decade. Some of them experienced the poverty, suffering, despair and fears that follow invasion, revolution, rebellion and famine. Two men were from Russia, one from Petrograd, the other from Moscow and Volga section, where people are said to have been driven by hunger to devour the dead. Bishops of Finland endured the Finnish struggles for freedom from Russian autocracy, saw their people overrun by Red revolutionists, and had pastors and deaconesses martyred by passion-driven mobs. One clergyman was buried alive. Almost as frightful were the experiences of Bursche of Poland, where the people's lack of clothing was such that for a time few women could be seen on the streets because they lacked decent covering for their bodies. Bishop Ihmels of Saxony labored to reconstitute the church after the German republic withdrew the former state connections with religious institutions. Bishop Bach of Paris saw the youth of France decimated, and the churches impoverished. Scandinavians, neutrals during the war, sent for starving Austrian children, and followed war prisoners into fever-cursed prison camps in Siberia. Everywhere there was hunger and nakedness, and the despairing cries of those who asked, "Where is our God? Has the Saviour cast us off forever?" It is not surprising when one thinks about such common experiences to find sincere men anxious to enjoy the benefits of the fellowship of brother Christians, setting aside the divisions of nationality.

The North American delegates sought the convention after similar, though less terrible, hardships. The world war pressed into one group 2,000,000 souls from synods that had not formerly co-operated. Over 200,000 young men from the churches were in the service. To provide for their spiritual care the National Lutheran Council was organized, and sent chaplains along with the soldiers. When the armistice was signed the council had commissioners in France. A few months later the poverty in Poland and the Baltic provinces appealed for American relief, and these commissioners went to Helsingfors, Riga, Warsaw and Reval. That was in 1919. There has not been a day since which did not witness sympathetic aid from American Lutherans to their brethren in distress. No intrusion into national or political questions occurred, not even in Russia, but money and clothing to the amount of millions has been distributed, and the community of believers has arisen out of the communities that have been relieved and reconstructed.

The future historian of Christianity will have an interesting story to relate of the way in which response to physical hunger and to the cries of undernourished children developed into a great spiritual reconstruction. The localized humanitarian relief has expanded into work that seeks to save souls as well as bodies, and even underwrites the continuance of evangelism in a dozen foreign mission fields orphaned by the war. The fellowship of suffering steps upward to the fraternity of missioning.

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## AUTOSUGGESTION.

A reader who peruses "Our Book Table" from month to month will have been impressed by the number of books dealing with the mind and soul of man that are continuously coming from the press. Students have been exploring the fields of psychology and mental activity during the past decade or two, endeavoring to discover and set forth in orderly array the laws governing these elusive subjects. Just now autosuggestion is near the center of the stage, and the publication of a lucid book* upon it by a French practitioner affords occasion for a paragraph here.

M. Dolonne classes autosuggestion among the scientific discoveries of our day. He believes its effects are capable of repairing the physical and moral ruins of those who know how to make use of it. He defines it as the realization of an idea by the subconscious mind. There is nothing miraculous or occult about it: it works within the laws of nature through the imagination. While the prime purpose of the book has to do with physical healing, the author intimates that the benefits of autosuggestion show themselves in the moral and educational spheres. As a matter of fact, the healing aspect of the case has only minor emphasis. "How many moral shipwrecks who have given away to despair," he says, "alcoholics, morphomaniacs and other drug-takers, are saved every day by the salvation held out to them in autosuggestion! There is no better weapon for waging a victorious war against passions, defects and vices. Thanks to it bad habits and unfortunate tendencies disappear, the spirit reawakens to well-being."

The Christian believer knows this claim is overdrawn, but it is hardly too much to say that autosuggestion retires Christian Science and all its tribe into the discard, for it takes all that is good and true in these, leaves behind the proved rubbish, and adds results of latest study and observation.

We do not propose to discuss M. Dolonne's immediate claims. What interests us is to get at the heart of his theories. For, indeed, psychology and mental science are only capturing and classifying old-fashioned ideas under new names. Thoughtful parents, and teachers, and physicians, have always observed the mental moods of their charges, and their observation and practice long ago passed into the wisdom of the race.

M. Dolonne is honest enough to admit that mighty little is known by psychologists even yet. "It is difficult, not to say impossible, to explain the subconscious." It acts "through those unknown forces

* Self-healing by Autosuggestion, by A. Dolonne. E. P. Dutton and Co., New York. 110 pages. $1.50.

natural to our being." Hence "knowledge of self is not only difficult, but impossible." The psychology of the subconscious "does not respond to a single known physiological law."

He belongs to the same school of thought as M. Coué, and like him magnifies the imagination, not the will. True, an idea must germinate through an act of the will, "but the will must efface itself as soon as it has fulfilled this task, so that the idea may remain alone in the imagination."

The grave defect of M. Dolonne's theories is that he leaves God out of account. God, the Bible, prayer, sin,—you would not know by reading the book that any religious fact or idea existed in the experience or vocabulary of mankind. Autosuggestion takes the place of God. In the closing chapter, which summarizes all the explanations that have gone before, a guide is given to the exercise of autosuggestion as to time, physical relaxation, mental passivity, recollection, certainty, optimism, confidence, hope, and so on. What are these but parallels of the quiet hour, the right attitude of mind and heart, meditation, assurance, and other elements of a rich spiritual experience?

The book leaves us with two clear thoughts:

First, that nothing is claimed for autosuggestion which cannot be more effectively and permanently achieved by the grace of God; and

Second, if autosuggestion is scientific, then the ideas and practices of the Christian life are scientific.

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## SELECTED EXPOSITORY SUGGESTIONS.

*I see men as trees, walking. Mark 8. 24.*

When Jesus had finished his healing work with the blind man at Bethsaida, "he was restored, and saw all things clearly,"—the word is literally, "from afar."

The vision which Jesus imparts reveals to the Christian heart even the most remote, the most degraded, the most prodigal, the most hopeless peoples; and that vision constrains us to bear to all these the blessed gospel of our Lord.—Dr. Henry Sloane Coffin.

*Blessed is the man . . . . who passing through the valley of Baca make it a well. Psalm 84. 5, 6.*

This valley is not a geographical place: it is a place in the region of the spirit. "The valley of balsam trees" is perhaps the best translation. These trees grow well in dry and waterless places, and the Psalmist's meaning seems to be: "Blessed is the man who, passing through the dry and waterless places of life, turns them into places of inspiration."—Rev. James Reid.

All prophecy is in essence Messianic. All the hopes which God has inspired in the hearts of men, whether by articulate voices in the Old Testament, or by the providential guidance of the race, or by the very constitution of human nature, must look to him to be made good. To borrow the language of Paul, "How many soever are the promises of God, in him is the Yea" (2 Corinthians 1. 20). They must be fulfilled in him, or not at all; or rather we should say, They have been fulfilled in him, and in no other.—Dr. James Denny.

The last half of Romans 1 records the degradation of the race. With such facts as we have before us here, the doctrine of evolution, so far as it affects the morals of humankind, becomes a doctrine of EVILUTION. Mankind goes not from bad to better, but from bad to worse. Human religions, human philosophy, and human activity expend themselves on a ladder that reaches down, not up. Paul gives us the root-cause of all human apostasy in a single phrase: "they did not like" (verse 28).

The writer has seen this passage translated thus: "As they did not SEARCH TO RETAIN God in their knowledge." That is truth, whether it is translation or not.—Alan Burns.

*And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him. Luke 15. 16.*

The longing of the prodigal for husks, or carob-pods, pictures the intensity of his hunger, and his feeding of swine the shamefulness of his servitude as a son of Abraham. He would fain have been filled with the husks,—not "filled his belly," as the Authorized Version has it, for he could easily have done that,—but the right reading, as in the Revised Version, denotes that

he would fain have been filled,—that is, satisfied with the husks that the swine did eat. The same words "to be filled" are used in Luke 6. 21, "Blessed are ye that hunger: for ye shall be filled," that is, satisfied to the full. But no such satisfaction was to be procured in the far country: only servitude and a famine of all that whereon the soul of man can live.

*He shall grow up before him . . . . as a root out of a dry ground. Isaiah 53. 2.*

"A root out of a dry ground" is no mere figure of speech, but sober fact. The dry deserts of Arabia and those central and western regions of South Africa which are almost constantly deprived of rain, are yet "distinguished for their comparatively abundant vegetation and their immense development of animal life." Tuberous roots buried far beneath the ground are, in spite of the scorching sun, filled with a cool and refreshing fluid, while their thick, fleshy leaves imbibe and retain moisture from the parched atmosphere and soil. "They are," writes Hugh Macmillan, "replete with nourishment and life when all within the horizon is desolation and death. They seem to have a special vitality in themselves, and, unlike all other plants, seem to be independent of circumstances."

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## CURRENT THOUGHT.

The great question of today is not, Is Christianity true? but, **Is Christianity liveable?**—Dr. John A. Hutton.

Jesus possessed the personality of God. **The credential of his deity** is his personality. When we say Jesus we mean God. —Dr. W. W. Bustard.

**Young men** are as responsive to the call to the ministry today as they ever were in the past. We have heard and read much about the opportunities for making money, for serving in other fields, etc., that are causing young men to be heedless of the call to the ministry. This is not so. The trouble is that young men are not hearing the call. We are not sounding out the call as we should be.—President E. Y. Mullins.

**The Jews** are ordained by God to clean up things that are ready to disappear. These Jewish financiers are not building anything. They wait until things begin to decay, then they get into them. Any institution which has ceased to progress belongs by rights to them, and they prepare to take it over. Pretty soon you will find them injecting their wonderful embalming fluid into it, which they call "finance."—Henry Ford in "Collier's."

It is said that the Christian church today is at **a crisis.** Well, this seems natural, inevitable, and not at all alarming to a believer in Christ, confident that truth will prevail. The fact is, Christianity was born in a crisis and never has gotten out of it, and never will till the final victory is won and questioning minds of men are brought into harmony with the mind of Christ Jesus.—Dr. Henry van Dyke.

The world has been made safe for democracy. There need now be no fear that any such mad design as that entertained by the isolent and ignorant Hohenzollerns and their counselors may prevail against it. But democracy has not yet made **the world safe against irrational revolution.** That supreme task, which is nothing less than the salvation of civilization, now faces democracy, insistent, imperative. There is no escaping it, unless everything we have built up is presently to fall in ruin about us; and the United States as the greatest of democracies, must undertake it.

The road that leads away from revolution is clearly marked, for it is defined by the nature of men and of organized society. It therefore behooves us to study very carefully and very candidly the exact nature of the task, and the means of its accomplishment.

The sum of the whole matter is this, that our civilization cannot survive materially unless it be redeemed spiritually. Here is the final challenge to our churches, to our political organizations and to our capitalists,—to every one who fears God or loves his country.—Ex-President Woodrow Wilson.

True sacrifice consists not so much in giving up great things as in daily relinquishing personal enjoyments for the sake of others, without looking for love or gratitude in return.

# THE MISSION FIELD: AT HOME AND ABROAD.

This department is shortened this month in view of the fact that November will be a **special missionary number.**

As one rich Korean put it: "One has no place else to rest his mind, there is **no love outside the church.** I must follow the Christ!"

Sometime ago a missionary in **Ecuador** made a trip to Babahoyo, and arrived in time for a feast to one of the saints. These feasts are a time of carousing and drinking, and a general "good time."

At this particular town one of the main features was the climbing of a greased pole, the one who was able to climb highest receiving as a prize a bottle of whiskey and a copy of "El Camino Hacia Dios" ("The Way to God," by D. L. Moody, in Spanish).

If the priest had known that this was a Protestant book, would he have allowed it to be given away? We are hoping that after the effects of the whiskey had worn off the man might have read the book and derived benefit therefrom. —A. E.

Dr. Irwin H. Correll, of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States, who has just completed fifty years of residence in Japan, gives out the following interesting statistics concerning **Christian progress in Japan** within the past half century:

1873—One organized church of 11 members.
1923—About 1500 churches with 130,000 communicants.

1873—No Japanese ordained clergymen.
1923—More than 900.

1873—No church buildings.
1923—Now numbered by the hundreds, reaching about 1000.

1873—One organized Christian school for girls.
1923—Middle school grade or over, 100 institutions with an enrollment of about 20,000.

1873—Christianity frowned upon by the government, hated and suspected by the people.
1923—Christianity has gained the respect of the government and the confidence of the people. Its influence over the nation is far beyond what the number of Christians would signify.

**Dr. J. N. Farquhar's setting forth of the services** rendered by Christian missionaries to **Indian vernaculars is** quoted in the "Modern Review," as follows:

1. The Bible already exists in every Indian vernacular of any real importance. Of the value of this vast piece of work for the kingdom of Christ and for the uplift of India, I will not speak. I simply wish to call your attention to this fact, that in order to be able to put the Bible into the vernaculars missionaries have in many cases reduced the language to writing for the first time. This is the first of the seven outstanding services.

2. Not only in these backward languages, but in many of the great vernaculars also, the missionaries wrote the first grammars and compiled the earliest dictionaries.

3. In most parts of India modern vernacular education was created by missionaries.

4. Modern vernacular educational literature was created by missionaries. Other men took up the task at later dates, but throughout the country the work of writing textbooks was started, at almost every point, by missionaries.

5. Through their vernacular educational books missionaries formed, in almost every language area, modern vernacular prose, the language which is now the vehicle of ordinary writing in every vernacular.

6. In many cases missionaries were the first to produce printed books in the vernaculars. Here also they were soon followed by men of other faiths, but in the beginning they were usually alone.

7. The last of the seven services is this, that in several places missionaries created vernacular journalism.

### Forty Years of Christian Work in Amoy.

To revisit Amoy after an absence of nearly forty-four years gives one a vivid impression of the work being done.

Half a century ago there was one small girls' school in the Amoy Mission of the Reformed Church in America. Today there are five hundred girls in the one mission

compound, to say nothing of the many other schools in various parts of the Amoy field.

Almost across the way are as many boys and men, from the earlier grades up to the graduating class of Talmage College.

On the island of Kolangsu, the first church built for the Chinese has been abandoned because it was too small, and a larger building has been erected seating one thousand people. And even in this church it is necessary to have two morning services to accommodate the crowds. There is also an afternoon service.

Over the harbor, in the city of Amoy, there are four native churches with their own pastors, managing their own affairs and no longer needing the tutelage of missionaries. It is a revelation to meet these men and their wives, and by their faces and speech to see what outstanding men they are.

A journey of thirty-five miles up country by steam launch and automobile, run by natives and taking only three hours where formerly a day was required for the trip, brought us to a missionary center, with its local church and self-supported pastor, its resident missionaries and wonderful possibilities. This was only an out-station in the earlier days. Now there are still other flourishing centers further inland in many directions.

The return journey, partly by boat and mainly by train over a Chinese railway, gave further vision. Decayed temples were in evidence, given over to the moles and the bats, and here and there a community was sighted where its chief building was neither a temple nor a yamen, but a Christian church. Further, one learns that many of these village churches are supported by the missionary societies of the native congregations in Amoy, which eventually will be able to take over all the work. In the meantime the church in America must support the work on a larger scale with larger gifts, that its representatives may go on preaching, teaching, healing and entering new fields to establish new centers from which the leaven is to spread.—Rev. G. E. Talmage.

### Do College Graduate Church Members Lapse?

This is a pertinent question in China. Some aver that the proportion lapsing is large; a recent study of six leading colleges leads to the conclusion that it is not.

To begin with, about 85 per cent of their students are church members. One of our correspondents thinks that the proportion of students lapsing from the church after leaving school is greater in the lower grades. The lapses which occur are not all found among those from non-Christian families. One correspondent mentions lapsing as being more prominent among students from Christian families. Be that as it may, in these institutions the proportion of College graduates lapsing from church life is estimated as varying between nothing and 30 per cent: the average for the six institutions being about 15 per cent. How that compares with the extent of similar lapses in Western lands we do not know. It is certainly not large nor discouraging.

It is sometimes assumed that lapsing from church life is more prominent in connection with school churches than rural or other churches. Again this study points to the opposite conclusion. The head of one of these institutions had much personal experience of the rural church. He thinks that the proportion of college students who lapse would only be half as large as that among rural Christians. That the proportion lapsing is greater among rural Christians than college graduates is borne out by all the other correspondents except one, who has no evidence either way.

All this implies that Christian education deepens Christian stability.

Although the proportion of college graduate church members who lapse is not large, yet it must not be ignored. The causes given as leading to such lapsing are worth study. One, the clannish disposition which dislikes breaking with the old church, operates in connection with other Christians as well as students. The others are: (1) Inadequacy of student Christianity; easy acquiescence in prevailing school ideals. To meet this lack of character-building environment one educationalist suggests less rules and more student government.

(2) The church lacks vision and program; its intellectual and material equipment contrast unfavorably with those in the school church. (3) School church life is too artificial and church activities too restricted. The student thus lacks opportunity to know real church life. (4) Non-Christian family influence. (5) The downward pull of environment. (6) The absence of stimulating tasks. (7) Desire to connect with an independent church, which causes them to delay joining church until after leaving school, and which they often fail to find after graduation. (8) Residence where there are no other Christians.

Considering the conditions and difficulties listed above, the wonder is not that so few students lapse, but that so many stand firm. Intellectual problems do not appear to be prominent in causing these lapses. Social influences outside of Christian control are the chief factor. This fact forces the question as to whether school life as now conducted adequately fits the students to meet the actual conditions which confront them after graduation. Is mission school life too far removed from actual life conditions?—"Chinese Recorder."

## OUT OF THE PIT.

William Charles Terril, D. D.

A native pastor-teacher once asked if I knew what it meant to be born a heathen. The question set me thinking, which the questioner wished it to do. He had been remonstrated with for certain things he had not done, which his missionary thought he should have done.

Yes, what does it mean to be born a heathen?. No pen, tongue or camera can adequately describe such a condition. Even the simplest rules of life that govern the body, mind and soul in Christian lands are practically unknown. Cleanness of body, purity of thought and soul are foreign things, and thus every phase of a complex human life is influenced and colored accordingly.

Yet this man, born in heathenism, has developed into a strong and efficient leader of his own people. Why? Because of Christ and his gospel. This man's filth of body, corruptness of thought and blackness of soul have given way to the cleansing power of the gospel. Then he began applying, in a very practical manner, the power of the gospel to his own people.

Here is this man, one time guilty of breaking every "Thou shalt not," a pastor-teacher! He has been made into a new man. He was a stranger to soap, and almost entirely to water. Instead, his wives greased him with cocoanut oil and red clay, mixed with the juice of a tree. He then dressed in leopard, baboon and monkey skins, with a full supply of charms to ward off evil spirits. He worshiped and sacrificed at the altars of the evil spirits which tormented him. His principal pastime was hunting with his bow and arrow, and then drinking all and every kind of native and imported alcoholic drink, until he was drunk twenty-four hours of every day. A number of murders lie at his door. He found great pleasure in beating his many wives, even though they toiled all day in the broiling sun to dig, plant and reap his crops to support him and his horde of children. He was of the earth, very earthy.

"You can't make anything out of that kind of a being! He is not human, just animal."

Yes, it looked very like it at times. But underneath that filth and dirt of paganism, there was a spark of the divine. The gospel had reached it.

How do you know?

See the change!

Before the sun begins to peep above the eastern sky he is awake, and he rings the first bell for morning prayers. Then he returns to his house, gets a pail of water, soap and a towel, and has his morning ablutions.

"But that is nothing! He ought to be clean."

Yes, but remember his one time dirty body.

Then he goes to the little chapel, built largely by his own hands and with much of his own money, saved through great sacrifices. His people are gathered there for morning prayers. He conducts the service, leading in the singing, reading from the Book and explaining some one of God's truths, and closes with prayer. Service over, outside the humble chapel building the people greet each other with a cheery "Agaceni!"

If this man is far enough advanced in civilized customs he will break his fast with

a piece of bread, bowl of porridge and tea, but if not, he merely takes an ear or two of corn.

Then school claims his attention for two or three hours, and all the people, old and young, male and female, attend school unless they have a justifiable excuse for being absent. He teaches, and if his school is large he has helpers in the person of his wife and the farther advanced pupils. The studies are simple, but from his school boys have gone forth to the Bodine School and girls to the Hartzell School for advanced training. With great patience and perseverance day after day he taught those who did not know that words could be written, until they could read and write and count without using fingers and toes to aid them.

School is over and he has his midday meal, and before eating he finds time for a talk with God.

"Oh, but that's nothing!"

Yes, it is, for he was like the animal. He did not commune with a heavenly Father.

If it is the digging, planting or reaping season, he goes with his people to the gardens and works hard until sunset.

"He ought to," you say.

Yes, but he never used to work. Everybody worked but father. Now he works, and his gardens are so large and good that a European farmer close by became jealous, and said he did not want two white men living on the same property. What a change has come!

The day's work over, evening prayers are held, conducted by him, or by one of the young men of his village. Before or after the evening service another school session is held. Then there is the evening meal, family prayers, and off to bed, to be ready for another day's work.

Sunday is a full day for each worker. Early morning prayers, Sunday school session, midday preaching service, an afternoon evangelistic campaign in the surrounding heathen villages, and the evening praise, prayer and testimony meeting.

There are very many other matters that claim the attention of this man. Is there sickness? He must minister as best he can to the sick. Is some one of his flock dead? He must superintend the digging of the grave, the work of undertaker, or do it himself, and be the minister. Is there family or neighborhood trouble? He must be judge. Are there letters to write to relatives and friends "out in the world"? He must write them, or see that they are written. He must be all things to his people in order to win them for his Master.

He has come a long way. The pit from whence he was dug was deep. He has a long way yet to go. The hill before him is steep and high. But he is getting there, and by your continued loyal efforts, combined with our labors, HE WILL GET THERE!—"Inhambane Christian Advocate."

### A Prayer for Native Christians.

O Lord, we beseech thee, pour out thy Holy Spirit upon all the native converts, that as thou hast begotten them again unto a lively hope, so they may ever be followers of thee as dear children! Make them to be ready to do every good work for the salvation of those around them; that so by their zeal and faithful testimony, by their holy and consistent lives, they may glorify thy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord! Amen.

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## FIRST IMPRESSIONS MADE BY ST. MARK'S GOSPEL ON JAPANESE READERS.

The Japanese are a nation of readers. Elementary education is compulsory and universal. There are more than 25,000 public elementary schools and five State Universities in Japan. There are nearly 300 newspapers. Every morning at his breakfast table a Japanese can read the latest news from all parts of the world. All this provides an opportunity which Christian missionaries are eager to seize. Nowhere in the world, perhaps, has the printed Word such scope as in Japan.

In connexion with the Church Missionary Society the New Life Society now exists for newspaper evangelism in the city of Hiroshima. Articles discussing live questions of the day from a Christian point of view,—"Education and Character," "The Secret of Moral Power," etc.,—are inserted in a group of newspapers which reach about 100,000 readers. Each article ends with an offer of free Christian teaching to all

who wish for it. Or sometimes a short advertisement is put in some leading newspaper inviting all who desire to know of Jesus Christ to correspond with the New Life Society. Many responses are made, and in reply some free literature, including a Gospel in Japanese, is sent to the applicant. Any who wish to study further are enrolled in the New Life Society, and have the privilege of borrowing books from the Christian circulating library.

There is also a correspondence course in Christianity. Those who take this course are asked, first of all, to read St. Mark's Gospel over slowly, and to send their impressions to the teacher. To read these compositions, the record of the first impression made by the Gospel on intelligent minds, is an extremely fascinating experience. The Rev. W. H. Murray Walton has forwarded a translation of a number of these communications to the British and Foreign Bible Society, from whose magazine we now present some extracts.

One writer explains that he is "a comparatively uneducated person," and has read the Christian Scriptures now "absolutely for the first time." He finds that there is much he does not yet understand, and that it is not easy to write his impressions. "But," he continues, "I will just put down what I think." He numbers his paragraphs as follows:

"1. That the Lord Jesus was able to restore the sick, feed many people with seven loaves and yet have much over, and walk on the sea, are unintelligible events in the present scientific age. But as his is the life story of a good priest [a Buddhist term], and they represent the deeds of one who is ranked among the three great people of the world (Confucius, Buddha and Christ), it is not altogether to be surprized at, for he is the all-wise, all-powerful God.

"2. Even on me, who have not read many books, the teaching of Jesus has exercized an influence surpassing all others. The deeper the meaning and the more I understand it, the more his heart of love is seen to be wrapped up in it. 'Whosoever of you will be the chiefest shall be servant of all,'—such words as these make the color rush to my cheeks.

"3. The parable of the sower is quite easy to understand. I pray that God will make the roadside, the shallow soil and the thorny soil into well-cultivated and good soil."

Another writer thinks that his thoughts are still very imperfect, but such as they are he writes them down. Quite frankly he says that he began his studies with his mind full of doubts.

"I could not make out the meaning very much to begin with, but as I read again and again I have begun to feel something of Christ's ideals. His miracle of feeding the five thousand with a little bread and fish struck me as rather a far-fetched thing, and I wondered at once if it were not hōben [a common Buddhist term for 'accommodated truth']. Or again, that people who were ill got well again as soon as they touched the hem of his garment seemed a bit strange. But after reading Christ's teaching about the kingdom of God and about his love I came to the conclusion that a mere young man could not have said this. In short, I began to feel that he must be God's only Son. Further, as the book showed, Christ's own belief in himself as God's Son and his words and deeds were all in harmony. This was to me, who could not understand Christianity well, a very surprizing thing, and I could not help admiring him. The thing that impressed me most was that about the kingdom of God. I pictured Christ's kingdom in my heart, and made my decision to enter it."

If we may judge from these letters our Lord's miracles are not easy of belief to the Japanese, but his character, his life of love, and his teaching make an appeal to their hearts as for the first time they read the gospel.

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**Four Bible Facts on Human Life.**

Eden—A Bad Beginning.
Calvary—A Great Recovery.
Pentecost—A Divine Dynamic.
Heaven—A Worthy Destiny.

—Dr. Joshua Stansfield.

# WAITING!

*You turned to God from idols, to serve a living and a real God and to wait for the coming of his Son from heaven. 1 Thessalonians 1. 9, 10.*

*He who bears this testimony says, "Even so: I am coming very soon." Amen, Lord Jesus, come! Revelation 22. 20. (Moffatt.)*

They wait for thee,—in long forgotten graves,
Beneath the azure Syrian skies,
The dear companions of thine earthly days,
Till thou shalt bid them rise!
The lilies, whose compelling beauty stayed
Thy footsteps, vanished long ago,
But these,—although they sleep "a little while,"—
They cannot perish so!

They wait for thee,—the martyrs through the ages!
Though wrapped within their shrouds of flame,
They constant held aloft the lamp of truth,
And dying, breathed thy name!
They lie, unknown, unnumbered, in all lands,
Or scattered by the passing breeze,
But they will hear thee when thou call'st thine own,
Forgetting none of these!

They wait for thee,—beneath the restless waves,
Where mystic lights around them shine,
In silent depths no eye but thine can pierce,
Nor any voice but thine:
Heroic souls who fought the tempest back,
Then calmly died when hope had fled:—
But all who sailed with thee shall hear thy call,
The sea give up its dead!

They wait for thee! In little lonely cells,
Or great white cities of the dead,
Thy voice has hushed them to a perfect rest,
Till morn shall be outspread!
The world—thy field,—these sleeping ones—thy pearls,
Whose precious price was paid by thee,—
Shall waken in thy beauty, fadeless, pure:—
Where thou art they must be!

They wait for thee,—beneath the pine and palm,
Who never learned to lisp thy name,
Soothed by the lullaby of God to rest,
Returning whence they came!
They fade from sight, but tears grow radiant with
The glory of that first Noel:
For through the Babe of Bethlehem every babe
That sleepeth doeth well!

We wait for thee! For not alone the sleeping,
Within the guardian veil withdrawn,
But watchful eyes are turning towards the East:
It may be at the dawn,
And just as silently, that thou wilt come:
Or we may hear thy secret call,
And rise, and come away at busy noon,
Or when the shadows fall!

So many waiting, in so many lands!
United still, though sundered far
By race and tongue and intervening years,
Forever one we are!
Waking or sleeping,—over all the earth,—
Or on, or underneath the sea,—
The accents of thy voice shall thrill through all:
They wait,—we wait,—for THEE!

—Edwin Botham.

Some one paid for a Gospel of John that brought this whole Finnish family to Christ. Will you help duplicate this result?

# GRACE SUFFICIENT.

## Rev. Howard W. Pope.

I have a friend whose early life was very dissipated. About a year ago he was arrested and tried on very serious charges. The habits of his early life were brought out in the testimony. When the prisoner was put on the stand, he said with deep humility:

"All that has been said about my early life in this court is true, and a great deal more might have been said. But when I was converted, the grace of God came into my heart in such mighty power that the old temptations had no control over me, and not once have I yielded to them."

The judge in announcing his verdict said to the man on trial:

"What you say about the effect of your conversion and your ability to resist temptation is very remarkable, and what few of us could say, but I believe you are telling the truth, and my decision is that you be fully acquitted of the charges brought against you."

This friend has been for many years, and still is, one of the most successful soul-winners in the land. In his case the grace of God was found to be sufficient.

I know a man who was born in Roumania. At the age of fourteen he came to this country, and early learned to drink, gamble and steal. Soon he fell in with a gang of desperate highwaymen. One day in a quarrel over a game of cards, one of them drew a knife and started for him, saying:

"I'll get you!"

As the young man ran to escape his assailant, he turned and shot him through the heart. He was arrested, tried, and sentenced to the Ohio state prison for life.

In the prison he became very despondent, and planned to commit suicide. One day he decided that when the guard came to bring his food, he would rush past him and jump from the fifth floor. Before the guard came a fellow prisoner handed him a paper in which he read the story of a man in Chicago who was twice sentenced to the gallows, but who asked for a third trial. His old mother went to his cell and prayed that God would release him, and although his case seemed hopeless he was eventually pardoned.

When the young prisoner read the story he was led to hope that God could save him, and falling upon his knees he prayed earnestly for forgiveness of his sins. He was heard of the Lord, and before he arose felt in his heart the assurance of his acceptance. He began to read the Bible, especially the Psalms, for somehow he felt that David had a peculiar sympathy for him in his trouble. Psalms 25 and 86 he read every night on his knees. He did not know how to pray, but he prayed over the Bible. When he read in the New Testament how the Lord healed the sick and raised the dead, he argued that he could also open the door of the prison, and he began to pray for deliverance, although feeling unworthy of it.

Soon the warden and guards noticed a great change in his life. After a while he was paroled and allowed to work on the state farm in Dayton, Ohio. There he gained the confidence and esteem of the wardens and of many Christian people who came to know him in the church which he attended. His friends urged him to apply to the state board for pardon, and after seven years as a prisoner he was pardoned by Governor Cox.

Soon he came to the Moody Bible Institute, where I was superintendent of the men, and no student commanded higher respect and confidence than this youthful murderer. Often I sent him to the County Jail and the Bridewell to speak to the prisoners on Sunday, and no student among the hundreds that we sent there held such attention, or had such power over the prisoners. On his vacations he always visited state prisons, and planned when he left the Institute to become a prison missionary.

Both of these stories are striking illustrations of the power of grace not only to forgive and cleanse, but also to fortify one against temptation, and empower one for service of the highest kind. In both cases grace was found to be sufficient, as it always is when God's Word is obeyed.

In 1 John 1.9 God says, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all

unrighteousness." In 1 Corinthians 10. 13 he says, "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able." In 2 Corinthians 12. 9, "My grace is sufficient for thee."

No sinner, whatever his past record, need despair. God will supply all the help he needs. One may say that blood will tell, and the power of habit is very strong, and so it is; but it is also true that the blood of Christ tells. When he died for us on Calvary he let loose a spiritual power which has been and still is available for every sinner who confesses Christ as his Saviour, and obeys him as Lord and Master.

There are just three steps in the Christian life: accept Christ, confess Christ, obey Christ. The first two steps you can take in a moment. The third will require all your life. WILL YOU TAKE THE FIRST STEP NOW? The longer you serve Christ, the more conscious you will be of your unworthiness, and the stronger will be your conviction that God is able to supply all your needs. "My grace is sufficient for thee."

God never forgives our sins in part,
But cancels them every one;
And grace sufficient for every heart
Is furnished in his dear Son.

When we reach the end of our days,
Our heart should still rest on his Word;
For every fear will be driven away
By the presence of the Lord!

## NORTHFIELD SILHOUETTES.

Early in May a letter was addressed to former students of The Northfield Schools, stating the conditions which confronted the school in respect to increased cost of maintenance, and the solicitude of the trustees in the matter of increased charges to students. It was felt that the former students were entitled to know the exact conditions, and the purpose of the trustees to maintain the work loyal to its original purpose. Many letters were received full of expressions of truest loyalty and love for their Alma Mater, many of which touchingly acknowledged their gratitude for the benefits which they had received. Among them a missionary from Shanghai, China, has written as follows.

My dear Mr. Moody:

Your letter reached me before May 13th, and I need not tell you was on my heart that day. I could not get our Northfield-Hermon Club together on that day, but the following Wednesday I invited those near enough to meet with me in my home, and we had your letter read, and then talked together of what the school had meant to us.

As I looked around our little circle I thought, This is an example of what the schools your father started are doing in the world's work: one a doctor in a big hospital and training school, another a teacher in a girls' school, another a teacher in a college, another at the head of the women's work in our American church in Shanghai, another doing a big work for Russian refugees in addition to all her Chinese work, still another whose white hairs told of years of evangelistic work.

The only thing not represented in our little group was money. Woefully we said, "Silver and gold we have none,"—though we did get together a little gift to show our love,—but we realized that was nothing. Then we turned to the One whose are the cattle on a thousand hills, and prayed that the schools might still continue to mean opportunity and training for girls and boys who might not be able to get it elsewhere. Surely the schools must be kept true to the purpose for which they were founded, and all the years of service which your father and you have given go on bearing fruit. We certainly appreciate the problems you have to meet.

May I add in closing my own deep appreciation of the opportunity Northfield gave me? I am hoping now that my daughters may have the same privilege when we go home again on furlough.

With many memories of the four helpful, happy years spent at "Northfield Beautiful,"

Gratefully yours,

C. R. B., '04.

# THE BUILDING OF AN EFFICIENT CHRISTIAN LIFE.*

## II. THE PERSONAL DECISIONS OF RELIGION.

Rev. A. W. Beaven, D. D.

I am speaking these mornings on the general subject of the building of an efficient Christian life. Paul put it to Timothy in words that I have taken for my general text: "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed."

Yesterday morning I pointed out that so far as you were concerned you were the center of your world. You only can make the choice that makes it good or bad, happy or discontented, impotent or efficient.

Next I emphasized the fact that God, who is the author of the universe and knew enough to make it, is your author and knows enough to help you and guide you in making life's choices if you give him the chance. You do not need to accept his offer unless you choose, but if you want his help and his guidance you can get it.

This morning I want to show that there are definite methods by which you can get that wisdom and that guidance, and serious reasons why you should accept them. There are choices that you need to make.

The great, fundamental choice is the acceptance of Jesus Christ as your Master, as your Saviour and Lord. The essence of that is simply this, that instead of starting out to do just as you please with your own wisdom, you do what the Lord God wants you to do as shown by Jesus Christ. We call it following Christ, or doing the will of God.

God has tried to make it very clear and simple for us to know what he wants. Instead of putting it into complicated language, he put it into a transparent life, and life is language even a child can read. He made Jesus Christ, his Son, to walk among men, to be so easy of access that folks knew him and called him by name, walked around with him, rode in a boat with him, ate their meals with him. And after those men who had companied with him had severed that bodily relationship with him because he had gone on, they wrote it down in plain, simple language, including such details as the games of the children, and how he took up little children in his arms, how he caught fish, and scores of other ordinary things. Any of us can read this record.

Back of and through those very simple things, which we all can understand as we read, we find ourselves coming into the presence of a marvelous personality, and he begins to win us, and we begin to feel that same desire to leave all and go as his disciples did, when he said to Peter and John and Matthew and others, "Come, follow me!" They stood at the parting of the ways, and finally turned from self to him.

This is the supreme decision of the soul.

If you really wish to know what God wants you to do, nobody can teach you as Jesus Christ can. If you want to ignore the light upon life which he throws, you can do it; but if you do, you are robbing yourself of the best guide that humanity knows anything about. You will be like a little lad or lass coming into a home where their father has provided a furnace to heat the house, and saying, "I will not light the fire. There may be electricity here, but I will not use it. There may be food here, but I will not eat it." We can take such an attitude if we please. We can say, "God has given us Jesus Christ to teach us, but we won't use him." That is possible. He will not force us, our refusal is our peril and loss. It is not because he has not offered it and made it clear.

But I like to stress the fact that this guidance of Christ comes by your choice. I can advise you about it, others can advise you, but it never becomes yours until you actually take him within your heart and soul as the result of your own personal, individual choice. No religion is strong that is secondhand; no religion is vital that is not your own.

Every life must have that great crisis, when in the presence of Christ the person says, "I am ready and willing to submit to your mastery by faith, to accept you as my

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* Northfield Young Women's Conference, June 1923.

Saviour and Lord, and follow you from now on!"

Have you been through it? Is your religion secondhand? If so, make it first-hand before you leave this conference.

But you need this guidance not simply for one big choice, but for the innumerable little choices that go to make up life.

Just as bricklayers erecting a building make its walls straight and true only as each brick is laid squarely, so your right choice in little things is necessary to make the entire life safe. Christ can come in continuously as the close intimate friend and guide of your daily life.

Have you a friend whom you believe in and trust, and who is near you, and who operates to challenge you to choose the best? I remember when I was in college and used to play on one of the teams, we had a certain captain. He was the kind of a personality that put fight into you. When you were winded and about to quit, he would look at you, or slap you on the back, and you felt you could play the whole game yourself, if need be. Did you ever play on a team when you felt when the captain looked at you you could tackle anything?

Henry Newbolt has a poem in a little book called "Brothers All." It is a picture of the effect of a captain on a team,—first in a cricket match, and again when that same captain gets into the army. He says:

There's a breathless hush in the Close tonight,—
  Ten to make and the match to win,—
A bumping pitch and a blinding light,
  An hour to play and the last man in.
And it's not for the sake of a ribboned coat,
  Or the selfish hope of a season's fame,
But his captain's hand on his shoulder smote:
  "Play up! Play up! And play the game!"

The sand of the desert is sodden red,—
  Red with the wreck of a square that broke;
The gatling's jammed and the colonel dead,
  And the regiment blind with dust and smoke.
The river of death has brimmed his banks,
  And England's far, and honor a name,
But the voice of a schoolboy rallies the ranks:
  "Play up! Play up! And play the game!"

This is the word that year by year,
  While in her place the school is set,
Every one of her sons must hear,
  And none that hears it dare forget.
This they all with a joyful mind
  Bear through life like a torch in flame,
And falling fling to the host behind:
  "Play up! Play up! And play the game!"

All the way through life, no matter whether it is in the midst of a fight on the football field, or of the struggle of life, when you get to the place where courage begins to sag, if you have a feeling that someone stands behind you, big and strong and fine, and says, "Play the game!" it is one of the greatest encouragements in life.

In my boyhood, one time I was fighting a terrific temptation, about which my mother knew nothing except that boys of that age had fights that were real. I had led in prayer at morning prayers, and must have dropped some little word in my prayer that was a window through which my mother looked into my soul and saw that fight going on. After prayers were over, and I had stepped into the hall to get my cap as I was going to school, I remember mother just coming out, putting her hand on my shoulder, imprinting a kiss on my cheek, and saying:

"Go on, my boy! You will win!"

And I did, too.

This is a vital value of religion. When you put your life in touch with Jesus Christ it puts behind you the lift of a great comradeship. You do not fight alone. He stands behind you and says, "Go on! Do what is right! You can win. Play the game!"

I can look back across my boyhood and young manhood and see times when I stood where one step to one side might have sent me, as it sent other men that I had known, over a precipice from which they never came back; and at times like that the sense of the presence of Jesus Christ, the great white Captain of my soul, has been real, and it has held me steady.

We all face these perilous moments in life, whether men or women. The problem of sin is no theory invented by some theologian a thousand years ago and passed down through the centuries to plague us now. It is something real and awful. You do not have to go very far into our towns and cities to see the shores of human life strewn with the wrecks of men and women who have stood at the parting of the ways and made false choices, and all the rest of their lives were bound in shallows and miseries. Broken hearts! Crushed lives! Why? because there is such a thing as sin.

It is horrible and real, and no one of us is free from its danger.

Some years ago I was in a boat with a chum of mine, rowing along the shore in a bay on the western coast. We were rowing along slowly and lazily, noticing how muddy the water was, the shore a hundred feet away, when suddenly the boat began to slow up and stop.

"What are you quitting for?" I asked.

"Why," he said, "I am not quitting, but the old boat is fast on something. We must have run into the mud."

I said, "Why, there's plenty of water here. Put your oar down!"

He took his oar out of the oarlock, and reached down. The water was five or six feet deep. Then slowly over the edge of the boat there came the slimy arm of a devil fish. He jumped back from it, and I jumped back, and snatched the oar, and began to hack at the arm that had fastened to the boat. Then on the other side another arm began to come up. We realized our danger, and took the two oars, and began to pole for the shore, until we got near enough where we could jump clear of the boat and get clear of the danger.

In days since then I have looked back at that moment, and it has seemed to me a picture of youth passing through life's experiences, without any serious sense of danger, when of a sudden out of the muddy depths of a perilous place some vicious arm reaches up, and before you know it, the trend toward the right begins to slow up, and you are in the arms of danger. Young people, do not let anybody ever laugh you into the idea of thinking there is no peril in the sins all around us! Those sins can seize you, and they can seize me, people as good as we are are going down every day. No! I need the Saviour, and I need him badly. You need him, and you need him now.

And it is not simply that there are many open traps into which we may fall, but, my friends, there are deadly perils which may be affecting us without our full realization. We have high-brow and low-brow sins. The high-brow sinners look down superciliously on the low-brow sinners. That sort of thing makes me tired! There are lots of people who feel that it would not be good taste to commit murder. Some people who are very refined would not do a brutal thing because that is not the way they were taught. But it isn't so much because of moral conviction as it is of lack of taste for that sort of thing.

I never heard a better illustration of my point than was given by Dr. Woelfkin in my student days when he was a professor of Homiletics in the seminary where I attended. He said:

"I remember very well going one day to the edge of the town to see a merry-go-round. The tent was all fixed up, and the children began to flock in. Little timid girls and blustering boys were there, ready to get on the animals to ride. Over here was a big horse, and here was a lion, and here a tiger. A little boy was standing there looking at all those big things, and he said, 'I will get on the lion. I am not afraid.'

"A little girl would look at the lion and say: 'Oh, no, I don't want to get on that! I will get on the lamb.'

"Another would say: 'I am not afraid: I will get on this tiger.'

"Some would pick out the fiercest animal they could find, others would take the quiet animals, but they all picked out what they wanted to ride on, and when they got started they all went around the same center, to the same music, by the same power."

Now that is the way we do with our sinning. We look around at the thing we want to do, and then we do that.

"Oh," we say, "we wouldn't do what that other girl is doing! I think that is terrible!"

This is what we want to do, and this is lovely.

"Oh, no, I wouldn't commit murder, I wouldn't steal money, I wouldn't break the Ten Commandments! That would be terrible. But I will do this thing. I will be selfish, and self-centered, and I am just going to get mine while the getting is good."

The heart of sin is selfishness. The form of sin is determined by our natures and our tastes. But whether we ride on lions or lambs, all our sins are driven by the same power, and to the same music, and they go around the same center.

Sometimes I have a feeling that in the sight of God the worst kind of sin is not a

sin of the flesh, such as any of the sins of appetite or passion, or those things on which society turns its thumbs down so quickly, but sins of the spirit. It was the Pharisees, who were sinful in spirit, and not the woman taken in adultery, who was sinful in body, whom Jesus condemned the most. I sometimes think the biggest sinners are the people who just take all they can get, and take it for granted that they are so good they are supposed to get it, and they waste it on themselves, and let the rest of the world go to the devil. Ask yourself whether there is any sin which more completely contradicts the spirit and teachings of Christ!

Going on from that, I want to say that you women who are here ought to recognize the vital necessity of your thinking this thing through and playing fair by Jesus Christ because of what he has done for you.

Have you ever stopped to realize that for the most part you are where you are because of the steady and relentless demand of the teaching of Jesus Christ?

You are here as the equal of men. Sometimes I think you are the superior of men. At least you are living in an age where a man's real manhood is tested by his willingness to use his strength for your protection. We measure our gentlemanliness by our courtesy to you. When a man mistreats a woman, or uses his strength to take advantage of a woman, he has gone about as low in our code of morals as he can go. On the other hand, it was said by a great poet that his hero measured his ascent into Paradise by the increasing beauty he could see in the face of the woman that he loved. Modern civilization largely measures its manhood by the sense of glory and beauty that they love to see in their women folks.

But why do men act this way? Have they always acted this way? Do they act this way in every country? You know as well as I do that if you go outside a certain circle of countries you will not find men acting this way toward their women. No; their women are toys to be played with, to be bought and sold.

Do you find men measuring their progress in this fashion in Mohammedan countries? Or in India? Or China? You do not. I can take you to countries where men measure their greatness by the way they can traffic in their women and make slaves of them.

Why isn't it that way with you? Why do you sit here in the midst of a nation whose men mark their glory by the tributes which they can pay to you? It is purely and simply because the teachings of Jesus Christ have filtered down into the hearts of the men. Just so far as those teachings are regnant in the minds of men you are going to have protection. Just so far as those teachings are lacking in the minds of men you are going to pay the price. Women pay the price first when men are degraded. A man glories in his women folks when his spirit has control of his body. When his body has control of his spirit he measures his glory by the bestial way in which he can treat his women. Jesus Christ's greatest contribution to the uplift of woman is this teaching which stimulates and strengthens in men the control of the body by the spirit.

There are those who in this modern age are demanding a sort of liberty for women who sneer at the ideals of religion, who joke about the teaching of the church, who talk about religious conceptions of love and wedlock as though they were simply restraints upon liberty. I tell you with all the power I can put behind it, these very ideals are your protection: get them out of the minds of the men, and there is nothing between you and the jungle. If it is simply a question of the brute in man, God pity you! If the Spirit of God has control of him, then he glorifies himself by the way he regards you.

It is your option. A lot of women are playing fast and furious today with these very things that are the protection of womankind. I challenge you as Christian young women to play fair by Jesus Christ and stand firm for his truth. Every woman who stands against Jesus Christ, who sneers at his ideals, who laughs at the things for which he stands, is a woman who is hacking away as fast as she can at the limb that holds her up. When she gets through the job she is going to fall, and she is doing her best to carry others down with her.

I bring you again to the main question which I put squarely to you. Have you had that great dedicatory moment in your life when you honestly and sincerely yielded first place to Jesus Christ? Most of us have been taught at our mothers' knees the sacred and holy things of our faith. But is it yet secondhand with any of you, or is it firsthand? If it is secondhand, if you do not feel that there is a vital, personal relationship between you and Jesus Christ, I plead with you that before you leave this Northfield group you find some quiet time alone with nature, it may be, or by yourself in your room, where on your knees before your God you may come face to face with God through Jesus Christ, and may dedicate yourself and your life and all that you have to him!

It is the greatest moment in life, it is the greatest step of eternity. As your soul moves out along that path which we call life, and at last comes to that marvelous experience of eternal life to which death is simply the gateway, you can still move on, but you will never get past his leadership. You can move on with a sense of his comradeship in eternity that brings the peace that passeth all understanding.

May God help us to make this choice, and to make it early, and to make it firsthand, and to make it solid, with the help of Christ!

# AMERICA'S CHALLENGE TO THE CHURCH.*

## Rev. John McDowell, D. D.

*Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 1 Corinthians 3. 11.*

However much the modern schemes of architecture may differ in their views of construction and of ornamentation of a building, all of them are agreed in one point, namely, on the absolute necessity of a sound and secure foundation for every building. This vital doctrine is being translated today into other terms. It is being translated into every realm of human interest.

It is the dominant question in the realm of industry. Men are asking with greater earnestness than ever before: "Upon what does industry rest? Upon what must industry rest if it is to be successful and peaceful, a blessing and not a curse to humanity?"

It is the primary question in the realm of education. The leaders of education are asking: "Upon what must education rest if it is to meet the mental and moral needs of the world?"

It is the fundamental question in religion today. Men are concerned now not about the superstructure of religion but about its foundation, and they are asking as in no other period of history: "Upon what does religion rest? Upon what must it rest if it is to continue to be the dominant factor of civilization?"

In no realm of human interest are men more concerned, however, than in the realm of government.

The war revealed the absolute necessity of a true and firm foundation for the nation. Some years ago the young Turk began asking, "Upon what does government rest? Upon what must it rest if the Turkish Empire is to be permanent?" His answer to this question was, "No government is safe that rests upon any one man," and he proceeded at once to embody his answer in the bloodless revolution of Turkey. A little later the same question was asked in China, and the answer was that no government is safe that rests upon any one family. This answer was embodied in the new Republic of China. Who knows but that when all the facts are in we shall discover that the war itself was just another effort to answer this same old question and to say to the world that no government is safe that rests on an emperor or a czar.

Certainly if any people in all the world ought to be concerned about the foundation of government, it is those of us who are privileged to bear the name of Americans. We cannot afford to be indifferent to this vital question upon which the character and destiny of our nation depend.

* Northfield Young Women's Conference, June 1923.

We must not allow past successes or present prosperity to blind our eyes to the imperative necessity of a true and sound foundation upon which to build our blood-bought and beloved nation.

Upon what foundation, then, shall we build America? This is America's challenge to the church. It should come home to the hearts of all of us who are Christians and Americans.

I.

Let me remind you first that there are just three possible foundations upon which we may build America.

You may build America, firstly, upon a materialistic foundation according to which everything is measured in terms of matter, or what Carlyle calls "the philosophy of dirt." There is no God, no Christ, no Holy Spirit, no fatherhood, no brotherhood, no soul, no eternal life, no heaven in this foundation. A nation built on this foundation will become the victim of the belief that the entire universe is soulless, composed of one substance; that man and the beast, while differing in some points, are alike in that neither is made in the image of God, thus denying the statement of Scripture.

Life in man, as in other animals, according to this philosophy is but one form of force; the only difference between man and other animals is a difference of degree, not of kind. Thus the deepest relation of the social order is not that of man to man, but man to things, and the nature of this relation is not moral but material. To build a nation on the materialistic foundation is a complete denial of Christ's teaching that man shall not live by bread alone, that the life is more than meat, and the body more than raiment.

You may build America, again, on a commercial foundation, according to which everything is measured in terms of money. The first and last question inspired by this philosophy is not "Is is right?" but "Will it pay?"; not "How much good can I do?" but "How much can I get out of it in terms of money?"

A nation built on a commerical foundation becomes the victim of false standards of value and wrong conceptions of human relationships. "Under a commercial regime," says Prof. MacKenzie, "character hardly counts. Personal relations are evanescent. The machinery is the agent, the person is the instrument. The employer tends to become a little more than an exploiter of labor, and at last an exploiter of himself, while the workman in like manner is apt to lose all consciousness of loyalty, either to his employer or to his trade, or ultimately even to his own nature. History reveals the fact that wherever commercialism dominates, brotherhood is tributary to property. The outcome of this philosophy is often heard in these words, 'I have paid the fellow for his services: what more can he ask of me?' In other words, between me and him there is no relation; the only bond between us is that which money has created. The distorting and deadening power of commercialism expresses itself in the language of the head of a manufacturing company in Canada during the war, who, when before the legislative committee of the government, said, 'Our mill wasn't built for the glory of God or anybody else: it was built for the benefit of the shareholders.'" This is the final fruit of commercialism.

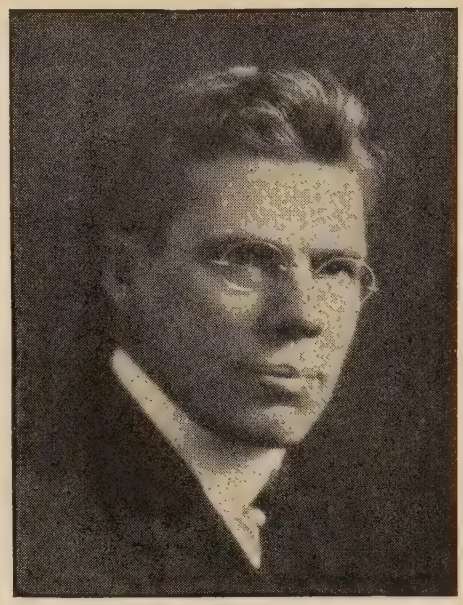
But you say that it is not possible that America will ever come under the complete influence of commercialism. Would to God that I could believe it! Commercialism works so quietly and so effectively that before men and women know it it has chilled their hearts and closed their hands to the higher interests of humanity.

May I give you a chapter out of my own career? In 1884 I was injured in a coal mine in Pennsylvania. When I had fully recovered and was about to begin my education career at Mount Hermon, I went up to the mine where I had worked to say goodbye to my comrades, the miners and the boys in the mines. On my way down from the mine I stopped at the coal mining office to say goodbye to the clerk. While there I asked the privilege of looking at the Accident Book, desiring to know what the coal company had said about my accident. As I turned over the pages of the book I came to the twentieth of September, and there read that Mule No.—, driven by John McDowell, driverboy, had broken her left leg in the eleventh vein of the mine,

and had to be shot. I turned over to the twentieth day of November of that year, that day of my accident, only to find the page absolutely blank. Nobody would ever know from that book that a boy had been permanently injured on that day in the mine. I recall very well that as I walked from that little office across the fields to my home in the mining village I recalled the Sunday school lesson we had two Sundays before from the New Testament, where Jesus cried out of an amazed heart, "How much is a man better than a sheep!" And I said to myself, "I wonder if Jesus were here today, and had seen what I have seen in this Accident Book, whether he would not say something like this, How much is a boy better than a mule?"

Nobody intended that commercialism should ever bring about this condition of affairs in that mine. The wife of the superintendent of that mine was my Sunday school teacher, kind and generous. So was her husband. But such was the penetrating power of commercialism in that day that it had made it possible that in the minds of those charged with the operations of the mine a mule was of more value than a boy. Thank God that day has passed, and passed forever, and no boy will ever again be injured in the coal mines of Pennsylvania without a full record of it being made! I count it one of the privileges of my life that I had a part in seeking to make such conditions forever impossible in that state.

Thank God there is a third foundation upon which we may build America: it is the foundation described in my text, namely, the Christian foundation according to which everything is measured in terms of the will of God and the kingdom of God, the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, in terms of faith and character, life and hope. The essential truth of Christianity is that man is more than a body, he is more than a mind. He is a spirit. He lives in a moral universe, in which God is gracious and offers pardon and strength for all who repent and follow Jesus Christ. This is the foundation that Paul is contending for in my text, and he declares that such a foundation can be found only in Jesus Christ.



Rev. John McDowell, D.D.

Build America on this foundation and men will be brothers, not competitors; personality, and not property, will be the primordial fact; service, and not gain, will be the dominant motive; character and not coin, will be the standard of value; man, and not money, will be the best security of the nation. These are the implications of a Christian foundation for the nation. They are fundamental in the teaching of Christianity. If a man realizes that he is a spirit, he will reach after the life of the spirit. If he believes he is only an animal, he will live the life of an animal and justify himself in doing so. If he believes he is only matter, he will feel no responsibility, acknowledge no brotherhood that is vital, look forward to no existence higher than that of the present, and as a consequence in most cases the poetry of life will disappear and the shadows of the prison house lengthen with each new day.

I have no doubt how you would vote tonight if I put the question to you, "On which one of these foundations shall we build America?" I know what you would say, just what men and women are saying all over this great land today, "O God, let America be built on the Christian foundation! God save us from building America

on the foundation of materialism or on the foundation of commercialism! Let us build America on Christ! Let the symbol of America be the cross, not the dollar!" That is what we have always said in every hour of crisis. That is what the men of '76 said, that is what the men of '61 said, that is what the men of '17 said. May that be what the men and women of 1923 will say: "Let us build America on Christ!"

II.

But if America is to be built on Christ, if its foundation is to be Christian, there are some things we must do, and do them now. We cannot delay in doing them, we cannot postpone doing them. We must make up our minds as Americans and Christians that these things shall be done. Let me mention a few of them.

If America is to be built on a Christian foundation, we must, first of all, put Christ into the thought of America in order that the mind of America may be genuinely Christian. If I were asked to say what I think is the greatest need of American life today, I would say it is the Christian mind. We are not looking at things from the Christian point of view. We have not that mind that Paul spoke of, the mind of Christ. America never can be Christian until America's thought is captured for Jesus Christ. This is the first task of the church, this is the great task of home missions. Oh, what a privilege, what a responsibility rests upon us of this generation to capture the mind of America for Jesus Christ!

You say this is a tremendous task. Yes, it is. But I remember that Paul commanded a little handful of Christians over in Cornith—great, cosmopolitan, wicked Corinth,—to capture the thought of Corinth for Christ. These were his words: "Bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Jesus Christ." This is our task if America is to be built on Christ. You cannot have a Christian America without having a Christian mind in America, without having Jesus Christ dominate the thought of America.

If America is to be built on a Christian foundation we must put Christ into the conscience of America in order that the standards of American life may be genuinely Christian. What is the difficulty today? Prof. West of Princeton University, speaking to the Board of Commerce of New York a few months ago, said, "America today is not suffering from low standards, it is suffering from no standards." What an indictment! I am not sure that Prof. West is right, but I am sure of this, that our standards have fallen since the war days. We have done things we said we would never do, we have tolerated practices we said we never would tolerate. Why? Because the standards of conscience have fallen.

But you tell me that Americans never were so conscientious as they are today. What difference does it make if our standards are wrong? When I was on the Pacific Coast two years ago I discovered I was missing some of my engagements. I thought something had gone wrong with my watch. I recall that I took my watch to a jeweler in Santa Barbara, and I said, "There is something wrong with my watch." He examined it and said, "Oh, no, Dr. McDowell, your watch is all right! You just have the wrong standard of time, that is all." My watch was all right, but I had a wrong standard of time, with the result that I was missing my engagements. There are many Americans today who are very conscientious, but their standards are wrong. When in Rome they do as the Romans do. In business they follow the law of supply and demand, buy in the cheapest market and sell in the dearest market, regardless of the effect of the deal. In politics they climb to the highest point, regardless of the process.

I come to say with all my heart tonight, O God, enthrone Jesus Christ in the conscience of America! Only as he dominates the conscience can we be saved from the sins of today which are marring our record and impairing our usefulness to the world.

If America is to be built on the Christian foundation, again, we must put Christ into all the relations of America in order that all our contacts may be genuinely Christian.

I am thinking of our international contacts tonight. Would to God the international contacts of the world had been Christian prior to that memorable day in 1914

when this old world was set on fire with war! Dr. Joseph Cook, that great prophet, said just before he died: "The 19th century has made this world one great neighborhood. The 20th century must make the neighborhood a brotherhood if the neighborhood is to be saved." Don't you feel like lifting your hearts to almighty God with me tonight, asking him to forgive us for our failure to make the neighborhood a brotherhood prior to 1914? Nothing else will save the neighborhood but brotherhood based on Jesus Christ.

I am thinking of our industrial relationships. This great land of ours is favored beyond any other land with resources, yet here we are torn asunder by all kinds of greed and lust and passion: labor against capital, and capital against labor, with the result that we all suffer. Only as Christ finds his way into our industrial relationships will we ever have industrial peace. Only as he dominates the heart of the employer and the employee and the consumer can we have permanent industrial peace and prosperity.

If we are really going to build America on a Christian foundation we must put Christ into all the activities of America in order that all our social service may be genuinely Christian.

There is nothing I covet more today for the Christian church than the corralling of the splendid social service that is being rendered today all over the land and all over the world. Social service is the child of the Christian church. You do not find it where you do not find Christ. Africa is not talking about social service today, India is not talking about it. Why? Africa has not heard the voice of Jesus saying, "Suffer little children to come unto me!" Africa has not heard Jesus saying, "It is not the will of your heavenly Father that one of these little ones should perish." Only where Jesus is known and loved do you find men and women concerned with human welfare and human well being. I covet for the Christian church the social service of our day.

Oh, yes, I know the danger! A friend came into my office a little while ago in New York City, a Scotchman who has known me since I was a boy. He came in in his kindly way, and he said:

"John, if what I hear about you is true I am afraid you are doing all you can today to lead the Presbyterian church of America from a spiritual gospel to a social gospel!"

I looked my friend right in the eye, and I said:

"Donald, if I am guilty of that indictment I am a traitor to every trust that God has ever put into my life! But I am not sure that I am guilty."

Then I turned to him and said: "What do you mean by the social gospel?"

He began to stammer and stutter and hesitate, and I knew he did not know what he was talking about, because no Scotchman ever stammers and stutters when he knows what he is talking about.

"What do you mean by the social gospel?" I asked.

"Well, when I think about it I always think of it in terms of socialism," he said.

I said: "I never do. The last thing in the world I think of when I think of the social gospel is socialism. Now let me tell you what it means to me. Let me give you a chapter out of my own life. I am a pastor, and I am called to the phone, and I hear the voice of my doctor saying, 'Dominie, I have just come from the home of one of your parishioners, and the youngest child is down with typhoid fever, a serious case.' I make my way to that home, I visit there day by day, I comfort the hearts of the father and the mother and the children, and I stand by them all during that long, weary illness. Meanwhile I make my way to the City Hall, and I get hold of the chief of the health department, and I say, 'Chief, where does typhoid fever come from? What is it?' 'Well,' he says, 'it is a germ disease.' 'Where does it come from?' 'It comes from the pollution of the water or the milk, or from bad sanitary conditions.' And I say, 'Chief, get on the job! I have just come from the home of one of my parishioners where a child is down with typhoid fever. Let us find the cause, and eradicate it!' I got the health department busy. Away upon the mountainside we found some old farmer was polluting the stream that runs into the reservoir. We stopped the pollution,

cleansed the stream and the reservoir, and through that process possibly prevented an epidemic of typhoid fever.

"In visiting the home, Donald," I said, "I rendered personal service."

"Oh, yes," he said, "and a grand service it was!"

"In visiting the City Hall I rendered a service to the whole community."

"Aye," he said, "and a grand service that was, too!"

"That is what I mean by the social gospel, not merely dealing with the effects of disease, but eliminating the causes of disease; not only saving sinners, but helping to remove conditions which breed sinners; not merely running the ambulance down the roadway and picking up the wounded man and taking him back to the inn and paying his bill. Thank God, that is a beautiful service, but that is not all the good Samaritan ought to do in these days!"

Donald said: "What more must he do?"

I said: "He must see that the road is made safe for every man, woman and child who use it."

Only as Christ is put into the activities of America will our social service be all it ought to be for him and to us as a nation.

Last of all, if America is to be built on a Christian foundation we must put Christ not only into the thought of America, not only into the conscience of America, not only into the relationships of America, and into the activities of America, we must put Christ into the heart of America, in order that the life of America may be a genuinely regenerated life. Nothing but a regenerated life is going to save America. No other kind of life will meet our needs. Reformed life will not do it, and informed life will not do it. "Out of the heart are the issues of life." That is just as true of the nation as it is of the individual. Only as the heart of the nation is regenerated can the life of the nation be regenerated. This is what we mean now in America by home missions, capturing the mind, the conscience, the relationship, the activities, the heart of America for Christ.

(To be Continued.)

# RELIGIOUS CERTITUDE.*

## Rev. John H. Strong, D. D.

Many in this conference are hungry for a certitude that has not yet come to them. Many here would give almost anything if they could be sure of matters about which they are still hazy and uncertain. For their sakes I want to speak on the subject of religious certitude, and I bring a few verses from the first epistle of John:

"We KNOW that we know him"; "We KNOW that we shall be like him"; "We KNOW that he was manifested to take away sins"; "We KNOW that we have passed from death unto life"; "We KNOW that we have the petitions that we have desired of him"; "We KNOW that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding"; "We KNOW that we are of God."

"We KNOW." Not, "We think." Not, "We hope." Not, "There is fairly good reason for supposing." There is suprisingly little supposition in the Bible. We KNOW; and more than that, we KNOW that we know. There is knowledge, so to speak, multiplied into knowledge. There is certitude doubly undergirding and grounding itself. There is assurance building itself upon assurance until we seem to stand in the presence, as we read these verses of John, not of a boast,—there is no boasting here,—but of a radiant testimony to the certitude which is possible in religious things.

A while ago at a dinner party I sat beside a brilliant young woman. We had a religious discussion, and at its close she thought to sum the whole matter up in these words:

"My guess is as good as your guess!"

Well, perhaps! I did not deny it. Her guess might have been better than my guess. But her guess was not as good as my knowledge. How hard people have sometimes worked to show that we cannot know! Have you ever heard anybody say, "I don't know, and I do not believe anybody knows," legislating their own ignorance for all mankind?

* Northfield Young Women's Conference, June 1923.

Our knowledge is limited, but it is good as far as it goes. When we come to religious knowledge, we come to knowledge that God imparts; and when God imparts a thing he imparts it adequately, so that it can be really known. God can make me know, can he not, what he really wants me to know? Or am I prepared to take the position that even God cannot make a person know the things he wants him to know?

We may KNOW. It is not guesswork. It is not a balancing of probabilities. The strongest probability in the world is only a probability, not the certitude we need. It is not the sort of certainty we should have, or we think we should have, if all our religious questions were settled.

A man said to a friend of mine one day: "If I could believe that Christ raised Lazarus from the dead, I would be a Christian."

My friend afterwards preached a sermon on the resurrection of Lazarus. This man professed that he was convinced of its truth, but he did not become a Christian.

Perhaps if we had the certitude we need, and that God is able to give us, we should not need to have all our questions settled.

There is a line that we draw every day in ordinary things, and it is the strangest matter in the world that when it comes to religious matters we do not draw the same line,—the line, namely, between a fact which we experience, and the explanation of that fact, which we may understand or we may not; whether we do or not makes no real difference so far as the experience goes.

Take the matter of eating. I sat down to breakfast this morning, and had an appetite. I ate, and I was satisfied, and that was all there was to it. All there was to it? Not all! Underneath those simple processes of eating and being satisfied lay a lot of questions which the most learned men in the world have not yet got to the bottom of; for example, questions of nutrition, of the assimilation of food, of how those little particles of food, broken up and liberated in the blood stream, are caught up and taken, as though guided by supernatural intelligence, to exactly the points in the tissues that need building up. How is that done? I do not know. Nobody knows. It may be that nobody ever will know. Yet that did not prevent my sitting down to the table, and eating, and being satisfied. If I had had to postpone my breakfast until I could settle all the problems connected with the assimilation of food, someone would have had a funeral on his hands at an early date.

Take the matter of music. Awhile ago I heard Ysaye, the great violinist, play. How marvelous were his poise, his grasp, his classic balance and beauty, his ineffable perfection of expression! When that concert was over I felt that I did not want to hear anybody unless it were he, or someone as great as he. But suppose while I was listening to Ysaye that evening, someone had come up and begun to talk to me about the explanations of music, about the mathematics of fifths and thirds and octaves, or even about harmonic structure, or the acoustics in the hall. I should have said to him, "Will you please stop? I am having a great experience. I am on an Aladdin's carpet, taken up into the heavens, where there are revealed to me the secrets of God. I believe that God is speaking to me as this great artist interprets a greater, and I want to stay there until the musician has finished and the music has died away, and I can return tranquillized and strengthened for the duties of life." The experience of music anybody can have. The explanations of music become an impertinence when they push their way in and get between me and what my soul craves.

Consider a sunset. Is it not amazing, the skies we have seen on some of these days since we came here? I remember a very dark day that dawned on me once. Things were forbidding indeed, and I was fighting battles that even those nearest to me could hardly enter into and understand. In the afternoon of that day I went out for a walk, and looked off toward the west, and there were heavy clouds there, but in the midst just a little bit of light and color. I went further, absorbed in thought, and then when I looked up, the light had gained over the darkness, and had spread; and when awhile later I looked again, behold, the whole western sky was a mass of opal and purple and gold!

Now suppose when I was taking in that wonderful picture someone had come up to

me and had begun to talk to me about the theory of light and the physical structure of it, about Einstein and Sir Isaac Newton, and other things. I should have said to him, "Will you please stop? I am seeing a great sight. I am beholding what I hope is a parable in my own life. I want to lose myself in these things that God is revealing to me, until at last they fade away, and I can go back strengthened and assured to the burdens of life."

Is it not amazing that we can draw a distinction in simple things like these, and then when we come to religion confuse the vital thing with the explanations of religion, till we get the foolish idea into our heads that we cannot possess the thing on which the soul depends unless we have explored its theory and fully mastered its intellectual groundwork!

There is enough in religion to puzzle us if we simply busy ourselves with its intellectual side. But do processes like that make one religious? And does the absence of them prevent my knowing God, or having the joy of the fellowship of Jesus Christ? We should think it very strange of God if he made this great necessity of life dependent upon our being able to solve all the problems involved in it. He has not done that in regard to eating. He has not done that in regard to music, or the sunset. Indeed, the power to explain things seems sometimes a hindrance rather than a help to religion.

There are, I fear, not a few people who have, or think they have, worked their way into the heart of the problems and explanations of religion, who seem to just that extent to have incapacitated themselves for that simplicity of mind to which God has ever been pleased to reveal himself.

I can certainly say this today, that the people who have helped me the most religiously have not been the people necessarily who have been able to delve the deepest into the theoretical explanations of religion. The woman—and it was my mother,—whose love made the profoundest impression upon me was not a theologian. The man who impressed me most by his faith was just a plain village blacksmith. A friend of mine without theological education, who had gone through some hard things in life, said to me one day, "John, there are a great lot of things that I don't know, but I know God." And he did. Just overhearing the prayer of that man in a mission chapel in New York was the means of the conversion of a lawyer whose works on Christianity are now commanding wide attention.

And what should we think of a God who reserved for the intellectual élite the necessities of the spiritual life? God is no respecter of persons. He is just as willing to come to me in my natural stupidity and blindness as he was to a prophet or an apostle with his great revelation, and he will satisfy me with the certitude that my soul craves if I wait on him for it.

### What We May Know.

What, now, are some of the things that God is willing to make us sure of? Let me mention a few.

The first is this: We may know that we are children of God. We may know that we are converted. We may know that we are saved. We may know that we have passed from death unto life. We may know that we are of God.

"Are you a Christian?" I say to someone.

"Oh, I think so! I hope so!" he replies.

"Don't you KNOW?"

I say to that same man, "Are you married?"

"Yes."

"Are you a business man?"

"Yes."

"Do you live in such a street?"

"Yes."

"Are you a member of such a political party?"

"Yes."

"Are you a Christian?"

"I hope so."

Why doesn't he know so? Imagine a man saying, "I hope I am married!" What would a man's wife say to him when he got home if he had said that he hoped he was married? A man may be just as sure that he is a Christian as he is that he is married.

How may he know it? In the very simplest way. Has he fulfilled the conditions of being a Christian? Then on the simple testimony of God he may know it. "For as many as received him, to them gave he the right to become the children of

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God, even to them that believed on his name."

Have I received Jesus Christ? I most certainly have. If I have not, I receive him right now this very minute. Then I am a Christian now on the testimony of God himself.

It is not a matter of feeling. Spurgeon once said, "The devil said to me this morning, 'Spurgeon, you are no Christian!' 'Very well,' I replied, 'John 3. 16, God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life.' I believe: I am a Christian now anyhow!"

"Ye are all children of God through faith in Jesus Christ." Have I faith in Jesus Christ? I have. I need him desperately. I must have him. I must have a higher power that I can tap. I must have a stronger personality and a better wisdom. So I put my trust in him; I just put this whole matter of my salvation right over upon him, and let him take care of it. That is all I need to do. I do it. I am a child of God.

Let any man dwell upon these things in this fashion, let him act thus, and it will not be long before he is saying, either in the words of the apostle Paul or in words that mean the same thing, "The Spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God; and if children, then heirs, heirs of God, joint heirs with Jesus Christ,"—if we just have the grace to suffer a little with him.

A man may know also that Jesus Christ is a living, bright reality.

"I know him on whom I have believed." Other people have known this. It was while Dr. Mott was working among prisoners that it came to him as a revelation, as it will come to you if it comes at all, who Jesus Christ really is, and that he was with him.

Some time ago I went back to preach in my old church in Connecticut, and in the evening I came down over Walnut Hill. I wanted to come over that hill in the evening because it was there one night as I was walking that Jesus Christ became a living reality to me. I did not hear any voice at that time, or see any vision, but in some way that I have never been able to explain to others or to myself, but that I have never been able to explain away either, he there became real to me. "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." That is his great longing, to come as near to us as we can bear to have him.

A person may know, to mention a third thing, that the Spirit of God is within him.

That was the commonplace of the apostolic age; the possession of the Spirit was the distinguishing mark of a Christian. It was that which enabled him to call Jesus "Lord." It was that that set his feet in the path of holiness. It was that that made the Lord Jesus a living, bright reality to him. "Eyes have not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, the things that God hath prepared for them that love him." Mr. D. L. Moody, when he came to that point, used to stop and say, "People stop right there, but they should go on to the words that follow, 'But these hath he revealed to us by his Spirit.'"

The Spirit of God is in the heart of every one of us who has accepted Christ as leader and master; and if we will set ourselves to coöperate with the Spirit in things in which the Spirit is engaged, then by the fruits that he bears within us, by his guidance, and by the almost felt presence and reality of Jesus Christ, we shall know that he is the glorious tenant of our life here upon earth.

A person may know other spiritual facts.

He may know that the Bible comes from God. Many years ago I went to East Orange with Alonzo Stagg and Horace Pitkin, to speak in the Y. M. C. A. Before we went on the platform Horace Pitkin read the 103rd Psalm. He was the man who went to China and was killed in the Boxer movement. As he read the 103rd Psalm that day it seemed as though a hand reached out through that word and took hold of me, and I felt in the Bible something I had never felt before, and realized that the Scriptures came from God. From that time on this has been a growing experience. I find that if only I have the manhood to get out on those promises and to enter into those truths, they demonstrate themselves to me. We may know this.

CONDITIONS OF CERTITUDE.

There are three conditions of this certitude.

The first is a changed nature.

God must do that great thing in us which he always does when we submit ourselves utterly to him through his Son, if we are to know. The world may resist the declaration, get irritated and object to it as much as it pleases, but it is true that except a man be born again he cannot see the things of the kingdom of God. Do not drive a horse or a cow before me, and ask me to talk to them about the music of Beethoven or the pictures of Raphael! They cannot understand Beethoven and Raphael. So a man cannot understand the things of the Spirit of God unless the nature of God is in some way imparted to him. I suppose that is what the apostle meant when he said, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit,"—that is to say, the man who has not been helped, enlightened, changed by the Spirit,—"for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot receive them because they are spiritually discerned," i.e., by a mind that has been illumined from on high. Yet some say, "I do not believe in the deity of Christ," not realizing that they are simply giving themselves away. Others say, "I do not believe in an expiation for sin," not realizing that they are simply publishing the superficiality of their experience. When God puts his own illumination upon us, we shall respond to the words and the works of God, and have a radiant testimony for others.

The second condition is: There must be an abandonment of all known sin.

Times of moral victory are times of clarified vision. Then we see radiantly things hidden from us before, for sin is like a cataract. Men and women who once startled the church by the power of their testimony have had their vision darkened by sins that have crept in between them and God, and have hidden his face from them. The New Testament says nothing about the intellectual causes of unbelief; it mentions only two classes of people,—one class faced toward the light, and the other faced away. The first face the light that their deeds may be made manifest that they have been wrought in God. The other face away lest their deeds should be reproved.

The last condition is this: There must be the faith that takes hold.

I have a friend who is a great preacher, that is, he has a wonderful way of opening up the Word of God, and that is what preaching means to me. He told me once the secret of this. When he was a lad, he lived in the Catskills, and his mother took him to a chapel there where an old grizzled man, a sort of Elijah, uncouth but godly, was speaking to the people. At the close of the service this man paused, and looking into the faces of the congregation said:

"Is there anyone who desires to receive some gift from God?"

To the astonishment of those present, this little lad stepped out from the pew, came forward, and stood in front of the old man.

Looking down on the boy, this Elijah said: "My lad, what would you receive from God?"

The boy replied: "I want to receive the power to understand and explain the Word of God."

The old man put both hands upon the lad's head, and he prayed a wonder-compelling prayer; and my friend tells me that if he has any power to understand and explain the Word of God to others, he dates it from that hour.

That is the source of spiritual certitude. God has it. God has promised it. God can impart it. God will give it. Then we shall cease scurrying to books or to others for secondhand knowledge of religious things, and have firsthand knowledge ourselves. Then we shall be joyful. Then we shall be bold and confident. Then we shall have light on life's problems, and influence over others.

Martineau, the great Unitarian, used to go to hear Spurgeon preach. A friend of his once asked:

"Why do you do that? You do not believe what he says."

"No," said Martineau, "BUT HE DOES!"

That is the source of power. When God puts spiritual certitude in our hearts, then even unbelievers will listen to us, persuaded even against their own unbelief that we have firsthand knowledge of God.

# OUTLINE MESSAGES FROM THE WORD.*

Rev. Floyd W. Tomkins, D. D.

## I. ADAM: A MESSAGE CONCERNING SIN.

The study of Bible characters is interesting because we see in them representations of ourselves. The Bible deals with life, which fundamentally differs very little from age to age.

The first character in the Bible is also going to be the first subject for our study. Adam, about whom we do not have a great deal of knowledge, and yet who forms the center of a very beautiful story, is full of human interest because he sinned; let us also add, because he found the way of escape through the love of God. God created man in his own image. The Father wished to surround himself with his children. Adam, the child of God, reminds us of Jesus, who also developed in body, mind, and spirit.

The sin of Eve was also the sin of Adam. Such is the nature of sin that it always influences others. No one can commit sin without its affecting others. The other side is equally true: every good deed makes the world a better one in which to live. Now when Adam had sinned, God did not punish him and then leave him, but offered him a way of escape. God's infinite love would not allow man to wander away without an opportunity to return. When we sin, then, immediately following, God's light comes out all the stronger to show us the way back to safety. Just like the anxiety of a mother for her child, so is God's love yearning for our welfare.

Look for a little while at the definition of sin. Is it violation of the law of God? Is it a breaking of the harmony of the universe? It is more than that: it is a question of the heart. It is a failure to obey God, who asks us to do certain things which his unbounded love sees it is best for us to do. It hurts God when we do not obey him. That is the measure of sin. It is not only a matter between man and man. God must enter into consideration.

We must look at God first. He alone can forgive and save. His love can never be destroyed. We have sin, then, not as a monster that is seeking to destroy us, but as a revelation of our weakness whereby we are brought nearer to God, for through the love of God restoration is possible.

## II. DAVID: A MESSAGE CONCERNING REPENTANCE.

Our hero for today is David. There is so much to say about him that it would be impossible to complete the story in one lecture.

His is a wonderful life. Although he was a murderer, an adulterer, a wanderer away from God, yet he would never let go of God. This latter is the main significance of David. In the same manner Jacob wrestled with God, and refused to let him go.

The only way by which we can understand repentance is by keeping hold of God. Repentance is associated not primarily with ourselves, but with God. The repentant soul sees God. We must get out of our spiritual egotism, and lift our hearts up to God. God does not turn away from us when we sin. Then it is that he wants us, and is very near to us, if only we stop long enough to notice him.

Sorrow enters into repentance, both on the part of God and also on the part of the sinner. The committing of sin hurts God. When he sees his children go astray, his heart is wounded.

But sorrow is not sufficient. Together with sorrow for the sin committed there must go hatred for the sin. Hate at certain times is perfectly desirable. For example, after we have been angry at somebody, and have lost our temper, how often we wish that the angry words had never been said! We hate the very thought of the wrong. It is right that we should do this. We should likewise hate all the deeds that make God sorrowful.

Then there should be a turning away from sin and a facing towards God. Christianity is a matter of position, with God going before us to show us the way: as David says, "The Lord is my shepherd."

Finally, there should be courage. In David's 51st Psalm, for example, there is no sign of despair.

David's weakness was God's opportunity. It is when we surrender ourselves to God wholly that the glowing presence of God is felt. If we let God have full sway, then can we be sure of salvation. "None of self, but all of God" is true repentance.

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* Northfield Interdenominational Women's Home Mission Conference, July 1923.

III. NICODEMUS: A MESSAGE CONCERNING NEWNESS OF LIFE.

We have had a study of sin as represented in Adam, and also a brief discussion of repentance as exemplified in David. We shall now go on to the New Testament and see what we can find of help in the character of Nicodemus.

The story of the visit of Nicodemus to Jesus at night is very interesting. Here was one of the leaders of the Jews, a rabbi, coming for an interview. We do not know whether he set out to criticize or to flatter Jesus. At any rate, Jesus brushed that all aside, and went directly to the heart of the matter. He told him he must be born again. Nicodemus could not understand, and said: "How can these things be?"

Jesus showed to him the childishness of the question. Today many scientists are opposing the eternal truths of life which are of God in the same way: "How?"

Newness of life is the great message of Nicodemus. What does this mean? New birth is not easily understood, and yet when we think of simple things that are about us there should not be so much difficulty. Every morning is a new birth. It is a symbol of new life. Every time we take a bath, every time we eat, every time we put on new clothes, we are symbolizing newness or renewal of life. Although we are God's children, yet we need frequent renewals.

Characteristics of the new birth include a desire for the best,—the ideal. We need a vision. It is the power that the artist has when he creates a wonderful picture. It is the power which the sculptor uses when liberating the figure that is imprisoned in the stone. Christ saw this poor old world, when he came, as an ideal world, as it was some day to be. This is the vision that we need. Another characteristic is the comfort of fellowship with Christ. Wherever I am I want to feel the peaceful presence of my Lord. I want to let him take my hand, and be my constant companion.

We should have the desire to make this world better. This will come with the new birth. With the knowledge of divine companionship a new power to sympathize with others will be apparent. Just as Christ forgot himself, so must we lose ourselves in the service of others.

Finally, the new birth brings good cheer and sunshine into our lives. Gloom and pessimism are driven away. In Christ there is no room for these. Let us not forget to sing and be glad!

IV. PETER: A MESSAGE CONCERNING FAITH.

Peter, the example of faith. Not the calm, unperturbed and peaceful holding on to God, but the faith that remains even with fear, trembling and falling; the faith that brings one back again after an apparent disaster.

Although our faith does not seem strong at all times, still we should not lose hope.

I like the genuine and impulsive Peter. When the Master asked him who he was, Peter, without the least hesitation, answered, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God!" Peter had faith that this was so, and declared it. In a great crisis very often it is not so difficult for us to meet the issue squarely with our faith, but it is in the common, daily, simple things of life that we fail and question.

In another picture we see Christ walking on the sea, and Peter attempting to do the same thing. This is a picture of faith rather than of doubt. Peter's crying out to the Lord revealed faith, for he called to Jesus. We need that spontaneous, childlike kind of faith in our lives. So, too, when we keep our eyes on the Lord, and not upon the storms, then will there be victory. With Peter there was a resurging of faith when he cried out to the Lord to save him. Added faith came with the cry to Jesus.

Then came the time when it seemed the hardest for Peter to have faith: at the great denial. Faith came in the tears of repentance. It is a great proof of faith when we turn to God. Life is like climbing a mountain. It has its slipping and falling. Faith is keeping on. Keep up the struggle! God is in the tempest and in the storms of life.

Finally we come to the scene on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, when Jesus asks Peter if he loves him. Why did Jesus ask this? First, because he wanted to hear Peter say that he loved him, and secondly, because he knew it would help Peter to say it.

Through Peter's entire life there was that falling and rising, but let us notice that the rising came every time. Deep in the heart of Peter was that flame of faith that remained with him until his death.

(To be continued.)

# "I HAVE PRAYED FOR THEE, THAT THY FAITH FAIL NOT."*

Rev. Floyd W. Tomkins, D. D.

*The Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not! Luke 21. 31, 32.*

It seems rather a strange declaration of Jesus Christ, does it not? "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." Why did not our Lord pray that Peter might not sin? Why should not our Lord have said, "I have prayed for thee that thou mayest turn away from the temptation of Satan"? But he did not say it. "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." It is one of those seeming contradictions in Christian life and in Christian truth.

In the great old church at Innsbruck in the upper Tyrol, amongst the wonderful bronze figures that are circled about Maximilian I, is one in armor, and the helmet on his head is surmounted by a crown of thorns. What a strange contradiction: the helmet to go forth to fight, and the crown of thorns, as worn by him who is the Prince of peace! We only understand it when we know that the figure is that of Godfrey de Bouillon, who in the Crusades was one of the few successful ones in driving the Saracens from Jerusalem, and his enthusiastic followers wanted to make him king. But he said:

"No! I will not wear a crown of gold where my Master wore a crown of thorns."

There is always a solution of these apparent contradictions if we are patient and if we try to find it; and I think we may this morning, by God's Holy Spirit, try to find an interpretation of this apparent contradiction in our Lord's prayer, "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not."

For a moment let us put ourselves reverently in our Lord's place and realize how out of his great love for Peter and for all of the disciples he longed for that which would be permanent, that which should come from the very heart; manifested indeed in the life, but the heart first of all being true. May we reverently put into our Lord's mouth these words, saying:

"O Peter, you are going to deny me three times! I am not going to keep you from it, because if my divine power kept you from denying me, there would be no virtue in your victory. But, Peter, after you have fallen, do not lose faith in me! I will forgive you if you will only turn to me. Peter, do not lose faith because you have fallen, and think there is no use in trying any more! Peter, do not lose faith when by and by you see me crucified, and think that I, the Son of God, whom you yourself did declare to be the Christ, the Son of the living God, have given myself up into the hands of men and that they have gained the victory over me! Peter, in those dark days after I have been crucified and my body is lying in the grave, do not lose faith, do not forget the words that I spoke to you! In those days when I shall come back again from the grave to declare to you newness of life, do not be discouraged because that newness of life will seem to be so different from what the life has been during these three years of our fellowship! In the midst of all the struggles and battles of your life, even when at last they lead you out to crucify you, do not lose faith in me! Know that I love you!"

Can we not see how our Lord wanted something more than merely that Peter should not sin, something more than merely that Peter should not deny him? He wanted to be sure that in spite of the denial, in spite of the fall, in spite of the darkness, in spite of the struggle, Peter would hold fast to him.

I am inclined to think that what our Lord said to Peter he says to us. Instinctively we wonder at our Lord's praying for us. Such a wonderful truth it is that the dear Lord Christ, Lord of heaven and earth, without whom nothing was made that was made, should pray for us! It is beautiful to pray for each other, but to have Christ pray for us! We instinctively say to ourselves, "Oh, if Christ prays for me, that I may not sink under tempta-

* Northfield Interdenominational Home Mission Conference, July 1923.

tion, that I may not do wrong; if Christ prays for me that I may grow in grace, then there is sure to be victory!" But somehow or other, in spite of the fact that we know Christ loves us and prays for us, we do sin, we do fall into error, and the days are dark; and then we remember that Christ prays that our FAITH may not fail in spite of everything, and we realize that after all that prayer of Christ is for something bigger than mere morality, important though that is; for something bigger than that we may resist the devil: the prayer of Christ is that we may have continuous faith in him.

### FAITH AND LIFE.

What relationship has this faith to works? How is it men think that Christianity is just leading a good life, and make that the end rather than the result?

God indeed says, "Be ye holy, for I am holy," but if it were possible for a man to be perfectly holy, and yet have no love in his heart and no faith in God and no care for Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world, what would his holiness be worth? If you are honest because you are afraid of being dishonest lest somebody should catch you and put you in prison, are you really honest? If you are pure simply because you are afraid or ashamed that someone may find out about your impurity, are you pure? Man looketh upon the outward appearance; God looketh at the heart. We need to remember that the goodness God asks us to have is the goodness which comes as the result of our love for him; in other words, goodness which comes as a result of our faith in him. Even the goodness which I by God's grace try to bring into my own life must be brought not because I am afraid of punishment if I do wrong, not because even I despise that which is poor and weak and unworthy; I must do both of these, but it must be because of something deeper,—because I love God, and he wants me to do what is right. That is the virtue of all morality, and it was for that purpose,—may we not reverently say?—amongst many other purposes that Jesus Christ came into this world, in order that our righteousness might be his righteousness, in order that our love for him might be so great that we would turn away from sin, hating it because he hates it; that we would turn to righteousness, loving it because he loves us, and finding in him our righteousness and our strength.

It is well for us to remember also that where there is a falling away from faith in Christ there is apt to be a falling away in moral living.

History shows that clearly. The lives of some individuals show it clearly.

That is one of the horrors of what we sometimes call in a very imperfect word, "heresy," denying the faith once for all delivered to the saints. It is sad enough for a man to deny, but the sadder part is that when the man denies he has lost the only power that can hold him, and he sinks down inevitably into sin. So our Lord in praying for Peter prayed for that which alone could keep him from always sinning, even although he was to deny the Master; prayed for that which should come up before him as a great power, lifting him out of the depths of misery and wretchedness, and giving him new hope and new courage, even although he wept bitterly as our Lord looked upon him.

What was the difference between Peter and Judas? Looked at in a human light I confess that the sin of Peter is to me more horrible than the sin of Judas. Judas was led away by the love of money. He was a thief, and carried the bag; and it may well have been—although I make no apology for him, nor do I attempt to excuse him,—that he said, "I might as well make some money out of this; for if he is the Christ, the Son of God, as Peter said, he will not allow the Jews to take him and put him to death. His power from on high will come, and he will exert it." And then he betrayed our Lord. But Peter denied him three times when the Christ was right there in front of him being tried before the high priest. "I don't know him," he said, afraid of a woman.

What was the difference? This, friends: Peter went out and wept bitterly, Judas went and hung himself. Peter had faith. He said, in answer to Christ's prayer, "I have denied the Christ, I have denied my Master, but he will forgive me." Judas said, "It is all up! I have betrayed the Master, I have betrayed innocent blood.

Take your money, you miserable Sanhedrin;" and he went and hung himself. Don't you see what our Lord meant when he said, "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not"?

And we remember how wonderfully he drew Peter to himself on that morning forty days afterwards, by the Sea of Galilee, when in his glorified body he prepared a little breakfast for the apostles. Think of that, you housekeepers! You talk about home drudgery. The King of kings and Lord of lords with his glorified nail-pierced hands built a fire there on the shores of Galilee in the early morning, and prepared the bread and the fish, and said to his disciples, when they came all weary and wet from their fruitless night of fishing, "Come and have something to eat!" Then he said to Peter three times, "Peter, do you love me?" He did not say, "Peter, are you sorry?" He did not say, "Peter, are you going to try never to do it again?" But that love for which he asked was an echo of the faith for which he prayed, for faith and love are one.

Sometimes faith grows so weak when the world seems to be in the darkness and shadow, and we wonder why God does not manifest himself. There are people today who cry out as the heathen cried out, "Where is thy God?" There are people who look on the gloomy and disappointing side, and say, "It is all in vain! It is useless trying or praying or hoping! Christianity has failed." And the Lord Jesus speaks in that still, small voice, "My child, I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not! You cannot understand, you cannot comprehend even if I tell you, but have faith in me! I who died, and said before I died, 'I have overcome the world,' and cried out with a loud voice on the cross, 'It is finished,'—have faith in me, for I, the Son of God, did not die in vain!"

Do you realize what he meant? The Lord God of heaven and earth, who is working out his own plan, but who is not going to make men good by force because there is no goodness in that which is created by force, who is pleading with men to love him and trust him and work for him and with him, fighting against sin and fighting for righteousness,—this dear Lord God

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hears us cry, "Lord, I do not know whether my faith is able to do this or not, whether or not my faith in thee is able to hold me in the midst of this strange era of controversy and difficulty and doubt and chaotic world conditions!" And he answers: "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not!"

Then there comes that miserable pessimism so often entering into our lives, that pessimism which always looks on the dark side, which always seems to pick out the bad things and forget the good. Christ sees the good in us. That is a wonderful story that they tell of our Lord's childhood. When going out from Nazareth, his home village, one day, he saw a group of boys gathered together, and going up to them to see what they were doing, he found that they were gathered about a dead dog, and like boys in all ages, were throwing stones at it and kicking it and poking it with sticks. When the Christ child came near they all became silent, and the Christ child looked at the dead creature with his wonderful eyes and said, "What beautiful teeth he had!" He saw something beautiful even in a dead dog.

There are people who go about and fail to see the beauties of nature and the

beauties of humanity, who fail to recognize that back of those things which blatantly and boldly push themselves in the way there is a God of love and a God of peace.

Someone said to me the other day, "Marriage is a failure. The home is gone."

"Why?" I said.

"Why?" he answered, "Look at all the divorces! Horrible! Two hundred and fifty in one day in some of our great cities!"

"Yes," I said, "it is horrible, outrageous. We must pray against it and speak against it and fight against it, this enemy of the home which is trying to destroy us. But," I said, "do you not know something else,—that there are hundreds of thousands of homes in this our own dear land, where husband and wife are living loyally and happily together, and where children are loving their parents and serving them? They are not published in the papers."

And some one says, "Why, the world is going to pieces!"

It is not! You do not know the things that are going on,—the righteousness, the peace, the gentleness, the patience, the hearts of men and women that are so true and loyal that they keep their difficulties hidden, and lifting up their eyes to God go on with faith to live. That is where the truth comes in; and the pessimist who thinks that everything is going to pieces, and who is crying out against the evil without a great faith in his heart concerning God and his power, the man who goes about gloomy and despondent, saying Christianity has failed, is the man who has lost faith in God. Christ's prayer for him has not been fulfilled, because he would not have it so.

So are those who go about and talk of a great many other things. You hear men now and then say:

"You talk about a God of love. Is it a God of love who lets little children suffer, and a God of love who sends people to hell?"

God sends nobody to hell. I stand up in defence of my Lord and God. He sends nobody to hell. Men go there, but they go there of their own free will. God, in order to keep them from it, has interposed between hell and his dear children whom he loves all of the divine powers, even the life and death of his dear Son. Don't you ever dare to say that God sends anybody to hell! I believe in hell. There is no Christianity, there is no heaven, without a realization of those who deny God and scoff at him being shut out. This poor, miserable attempt to forget God and deny his power contradicts the very longing of Christ's heart, "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not!"

I sometimes wonder whether the same thing is not true in our individual lives.

Why does God try us? Why is it that life is so full of ideals that are never reached? Why is it that we start out in youth with a grand vision, and we are tempted to stop on the way, and give up the struggle? Why is it? That eternal "Why?" is ringing out all over the world. The answer to it is not in an interpretation, because we could not understand the interpretation if it were given. The answer given is the person of Christ. "I have overcome the world. I am thy friend. I died for thee, I rose again, that thou mightest have newness of life." That is the answer; and if a man only learns that in all these troubles and difficulties and disappointments of life, in the things which he has to keep to himself in sorrow and in bitterness of spirit, which nevertheless are a part of the powers that are working he knows not how in order that he may be made more perfectly the child of God,—if he only learns that God loves him, then he knows what God wants: he wants us to have faith in him.

### Results of Faith.

What are the results of this faith in our lives, and how can we attain them?

First of all, it means a complete giving of ourselves to God, a complete surrender.

The reason so many people lack comfort in their religion is that they are holding something back. They say, "Some of self, and some of thee," but it is very hard to say, "None of self, and all of thee."

There was a young woman in England, wealthy and beautiful and intelligent, who wanted to do something with her life, having read of the noble women who had consecrated themselves to the service of God and of their fellows. She determined to be a trained nurse,—a most beautiful

occupation, consecrated forevermore as we remember the noble work that our nurses did on the other side as well as on this side during the war. She went to St. Thomas' Hospital, in London, and it was not very long before it seemed as if her desires were to be abundantly fulfilled. She was so intelligent that the doctors all sought for her help. She was so sweet and lovely that the patients all wanted her.

One day a great giant was brought in to be operated upon. This nurse was called by the surgeon to help. The ether was given, but anesthetics were not so thoroughly understood then as today, and when the knife was applied the man came back to consciousness in wild shape, and threw himself upon the doctor and pinned him to the floor. This nurse, seeing the danger, threw herself upon her knees, getting her back under the maniac, and lifted him up by main force, and then called to the doctor to extricate himself. The surgeon jumped to his feet but, half dazed, still held the knife in his hand. The maniac pressed the nurse against the knife, and she was taken to her room to die. God's strange way of dealing, a woman giving herself absolutely to him, and then her life cut off!

In one of her conscious moments before she died she said to the nurse who was attending her:

"Mary, will you please take down the words I dictate?"

Then she dictated that hymn:

"Oh, to be nothing, nothing,
Simply to lie at his feet,
A vessel bruised and bleeding,
For the Master's use made meet!"

That is what faith in Christ means. "Here I am, Lord! Do with me as thou wilt! Backward or forward, turn me any way so long as it is thy nail-pierced hand that does it!" Yes, faith in God means absolute assurance of his love and care and power, and absolute willingness to be used by him as he sees best. That is what he wants, because he wants to help us.

George MacDonald, in one of his stories makes a poor woman who feels she has made a failure of her life cry out to the Christian who is visiting her:

"I have failed! I can never be anything or do anything."

But he answers: "My child, God is making you, and you must not criticize his work before he has finished! You would not criticize the work of the sculptor before his marble is completed. You would not criticize the work of the painter before his painting is finished. God is making you, and he wants you to work with him and to work for him by letting him do what he sees best for you."

That is it! Faith in God in absolute surrender, which does not mean that we are not going to do anything, but that we are simply going to be guided by God in all that we do.

Secondly, it seems to me that we want to realize here the way in which we come to know the life of God.

We cannot know it through intelligence, we cannot know it through science, wonderful though intelligence and science are in life. The scientific man looks at the trees, and wonders how they have grown; the Christian looks at the trees, and he sees God. The old New England poet brought it out beautifully:

"One harvest from thy field
Homeward brought the oxen strong:
Another yield thy acres give,
Which I gather in a song."

Oh, to realize somehow or other, through faith in God, that God is in everything and everywhere, in the hearts of his children as well as in the workings of the nations in all the world, turning the wrath of man so that in due time it shall praise him, all the while being conscious that with God a thousand years are as one day, and one day is as a thousand years! And then the great loving faith pulsing up in the heart!

Jacob realized it when he cried out in the midnight struggle, "I will not let thee go except thou bless me!" He realized it again when the ladder was set up from earth to heaven, and he said, "How wonderful is this place! This is none other but the house of God and the gate of heaven." Many and many a sufferer has said it on a bed of pain: "God is so near!" Many and many a man has said it as he has struggled on against the evils of the world, and seen the light shining beyond the clouds—with no cheap pessimism, but with the magnificent cry of faith:

"God's in his heaven:
All's right with the world!"

There was once a wreck, and it seemed as if the poor ship would never come to land: away out on the ocean, sails gone, the whole hulk apparently broken, and a few sailors, some praying, some crying, but one up at the masthead. Suddenly in the midst of the despair and doubt he cried out, "Land! Land!" And the sailors fell on each other's necks, and kissed and hugged and danced, repeating the cry, "Land! Land!" They were miles away from land, the poor old hulk all broken, but land was in sight, and immeasurable hope held them. A brightness of salvation had come to them, "We will get there!"

That is what God wants: the magnificent hope that will not give up, the magnificent enthusiasm which goes on and on, always with the vision before it, pressing towards that which by and by shall be realized! That is what Christ wanted. "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not."

One thing more: The way in which we are to feel that Christ is in our lives, associated with them.

It is a fine thing when a man comes to the point where he sees everything transfigured in his life. Where other men see the darkness, he sees a light; where other men see suffering, he sees power; where other men see destruction, he sees, somehow or other, that which is to form a wonderful construction. One man looks at a building being torn down, and he says, "There, that is life,—destruction!" Another man visualizes the new building that is to rise upon the ruins of the old.

I came across a bit of poetry not long ago, written by one of our American poets, which pictures so perfectly this idea of transfiguration, that is, changing the evil into good by the life, by the power that God gives, by the faith for which Christ prayed. Imagine a soldier lying on the battlefield, wounded nigh unto death, alone, and then turning the very things that seemed to be so fatal into glorious lights of promise.

"Of wounds and sore defeat
I made my battle stay;
Winged sandals for my feet
I wove of my delay;
Of weariness and fear
I made my shouting spear;
Of loss and doubt and dread,
And swift on-coming doom,
I made a helmet for my head,
And a floating plume!

"From the shutting mist of death,
From the failure of the breath,
I made a battle-horn to blow
Across the vales of overthrow!
O hearken, friend, the battle-horn,
The triumph clear, the silver scorn!
O hearken, where the echoes bring
Down the grey disastrous morn
Laughter and rallying!"

That is heroism! That is where Christianity comes in! Not the poor, weak, despairing cry, "The whole world is gone to pieces!" Not the cry which looks into the gloom and mystery and sees no light. But the power which, under God, takes the burden, and instead of being crushed by it says, "Serve me!" The man who takes the agony of the world, and instead of despairing concerning it, says, "Inspire me to go out and do work for God!"; and the person who, suffering and lonely and disappointed, will not give way, but says, "By the grace of God and by my faith in Christ I will make this burden lift me higher!" —they have the true Christian spirit.

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### One for the Organist.

If I go into an English cathedral and hear at the beginning of the service an organist playing in upon a single eight-foot stop in four parts, I know him for a man of sense and good taste. If, on the other hand, in the two minutes during which he has to play he tries to exhibit half the solo stops of the organ, I know him to be a degraded and unworthy creature who should be snatched from his seat and scourged out of the building.

If, standing in the nave during the psalms, I cannot hear the choir for the growling of swell reeds, I know him to be a person who has never taken the trouble to find out what his organ sounds like from below, or cares whether any one hears the chanting of the choir or not.

And if he plays a march when the service is over, I depart in misery and humiliation. —Prof. Henry Cowles Smith.

# THE MAJOR TASKS OF MODERN CHRISTIANITY.*

Rev. James Gordon Gilkey, D. D.

*Gallio said, If it were a matter of open wrong, I should indeed bear with you, but if these are questions about words and names, look to them yourselves! I am not minded to be a judge of such matters. Acts 18. 14, 15.*

Most of us are beginning to realize that the modern church is finding it hard to recruit able men for the ministry. Some months ago a prominent Episcopalian editor decided to ask the college students of the country directly the reason for their attitude. He sent a letter of inquiry broadcast, and the replies that came to him ought to give us all food for thought.

One young man wrote: "A red-blooded young American likes a fight. He agrees with Roosevelt that fighting for the right is the best sport the world affords. We went into the war by the million on such a program. In France I regarded the American Red Cross as the most thoroughly Christian organization I had ever known. Why doesn't the Christian cross mean as much as the Red Cross? Why doesn't the church flag inspire the same love and loyalty as the American flag? I think the reason is this: Many of us feel that the average church is engaged in a useless round of drill and ceremony, polishing innumerable brass buttons. Its chief business seems to be recruiting more members instead of leading its present company into real action. The average church seems content to read creeds that are misunderstood, repress its worthwhile convictions for fear of division, and sing 'Onward, Christian Soldiers!' while its army gets no further than the length of the church aisle. The average church seems to have no objective. It does not want to be led into battle. Why aspire to be the leader of such an army when there are so many secular organizations actually seeking leadership?"

Those brutally frank and possibly mistaken words suggest a scene in the Book of Acts. A dozen Jewish ecclesiastics are trying to interest a practical Roman official in one of their disputes, but try as they will they cannot arouse him from his apathy. At last in evident impatience Gallio tells his attendants to lead the wranglers away. "Gallio said, If it were a matter of open wrong, I should indeed bear with you, but if these are questions about words and names, look to them yourselves! I am not minded to be a judge of such matters."

The spirit of Gallio is rife in the modern world, particularly among the rising generation. The average American cares little about speculative theology. He cares little about denominational differences and questions of ecclesiastical preferment. He will respond to the challenge of a great moral need, but the side-issues of religion leave him cold. People today crave reality in religion, and you and I can hardly blame them for their attitude.

How are we going to interest such a generation in the church of Christ? It seems to me there is only one way. We must drop our controversies about non-essentials. We must face frankly the major tasks of Christianity, and then with all the strength and intelligence at our command we must grapple with them.

Suppose we consider this morning three of these major tasks of modern Christianity.

### Christian Character.

You will agree that one of them is this: We must reëstablish Christian character in a day of moral and spiritual reaction.

Two hundred years ago a boy named Nathaniel Mather was writing his diary in Boston. One of the entries was this:

"When very young I went astray from God, and my mind was wholly taken up with vanities and foibles. Of the manifold sins that I was then guilty of, none so sticks upon me as this: Being very young, I was whittling on the sabbath day, and for fear of being discovered I did it behind the door. A great reproach to God; a specimen of that atheism which I brought into the world with me!"

Puritanism of that kind could not last forever. It put too heavy a strain on human nature. There was bound to be a reaction, and for many years we have seen signs of this reaction multiplying about us. We are liv-

* Northfield Conference for Women's Foreign Missionary Societies, July 1923.

ing in an era that holds the Puritan up to scorn and dubs his doctrine of rigid self-control a stupid blunder.

For instance, a great many teachers today say frankly they do not propose to make their pupils study subjects which they find uninteresting. "No; let the boys and girls follow their own bent, no matter where they may go in their wanderings and no matter how many fine and well-traveled paths they miss on the way!"

A great many parents tell us that they do not propose to make their children do anything. "No; let the boys and girls have perfect self-expression!" Then these parents tell us grim stories of the results of parental discipline in their youth, and add that they do not propose to give their children memories of enforced religion and frustrated desire.

Novelists by the score hold up to our admiration characters that have defied the moral principles of an earlier day, who indulge in one quaint matrimonial venture after another, and at last achieve "a glorious self-realization."

And the drama? The most popular play in New York this last winter had a scene that very clearly suggests the trend of our time. An American trader, living on an island in the South Seas, is talking with a doctor about the reform measures now being taken in America. The trader bites the end off his cigar savagely, spits it on the floor, and says:

"Reform! That's a word that makes me spit! Do you know what these reformers are up to? They are trying to take away from other people the thing they would like to have themselves, and can't get. I saw this reform business coming twenty years ago. That is why I left America and came out here."

Then the audience applauds loudly. This is an age of moral and spiritual reaction.

In such an age older people may be able to keep their footing amid the swirling tide. These older people were grounded in the moral traditions of an earlier day, and life has taught them wisdom. Life has taught them the supreme importance of self-control and self-discipline. But there is grave question what is going to happen to the younger people.

A situation like this puts great responsibility on the church of Jesus Christ. Somehow or other, at these crossroads of destiny in the history of the world we must reëstablish Christian character, notably the old virtue of self-control through the power of Christ.

How are we going to do it? Let the pulpit drop its discussion of non-essentials! Let it drop its preaching of debatable points that only divide Christian believers! Let the pulpit preach instead an unmistakable gospel of self-mastery, self-realization through self-control! Let us make sure that that old power to beat under the body and keep it in subjection does not disappear from the life of the new generation!

As a matter of fact, every fine thing we have can be traced to someone's self-control. We have what money we have, why? Because some people saved it when it would have been easier to spend. We have what knowledge we have, why? Because some people made themselves think when it would have been a deal easier and safer to accept without question the dictates of an earlier day. We have what moral standards we have, why? Because some people have kept themselves pure when God knows it would have been easier to let instinct have its way. "Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, acceptable, perfect will of God!"

That is reality. That is a task for the church. When the pulpit proclaims that kind of a gospel a busy world will stop and listen.

### A Christian World.

A second great task of modern Christianity is this: We must reorganize the life of the new world along more truly Christian lines.

Anyone who looks below the surface of things in a modern city will speedily discover situations wholly at variance with the mind and heart of Jesus Christ. Do you think, for instance, that Jesus could approve of the conditions of child life that he would find in the tenements of your city or of mine? Little boys and girls told that they must grow up strong and physically fit, and then asked to spend their first twenty years of life in a slum! Little children told that they must keep morally straight and

spiritually clean, and then forced to spend their adolescent years in a tenement! The Americans of the future told that they must be wise enough and intelligent enough to guide the destiny of the great republic, and then those same children taken out of school at eight, ten, twelve, fourteen, and put to work in cotton mills and beet fields! "Suffer the little children to come unto me!" How much chance do these tenement children have?

One of our younger poets has published a little verse called "Paper Roses." He is describing a little girl in the tenements of New York who was making paper roses. A visitor enters, and begins to talk with the child:

"Where did you get your roses, child?"
"I made them in this little room."
"Your window happy with the dawn?"
"No, sir; in fearful gloom!"

"What gave your roses color, then?"
"My blood, sir, as I bent my head."
"Your cheek is cold and lifeless now?"
"No, sir; 'twas my heart that bled."

"One white rose in the basket, child?"
"Yes, sir; it crowns the whole."
"What is it, fragile, soft and white?"
"I think it is my soul!"

What can the church do to change this situation? Let us begin by making sure that all the tenement children around our own church get a chance at life, liberty, intelligence, happiness! Let us federate our churches as soon as may be, and use the money now wasted in needless sectarian competition to further the efforts for child welfare already being made among us! Then let the church of Christ stand as a unit behind the effort now being made to prohibit child labor in the United States by an amendment to the Federal Constitution. Here is reality. A church with such a message and such a program will get a hearing.

Do you know General William Booth's indictment of the English churches of a generation ago? He said:

"It is no better than ghastly mockery to call by the name of Christ those churches which in the midst of lost multitudes either sleep in apathy or display a fitful interest in minor rituals. Why all this apparatus of churches and meeting-houses to save men from a future perdition when never a helping hand is

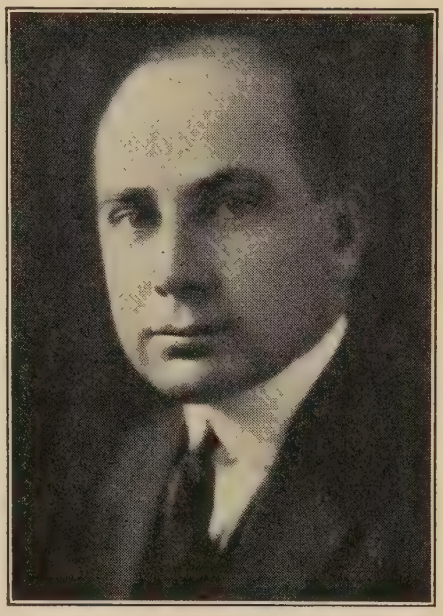

*Photo by Bachrach.*

Dr. James Gordon Gilkey.

stretched out to save them from the inferno of their present life? Is it not time for the churches to drop their wrangling about the infinitely little and the infinitely obscure, and unite all their energies in a great effort to break the perpetuity of poverty and rescue at least a few of those little ones they say their Founder came to save?"

God knows that applies to plenty of American churches today!

Or consider, if you will, the international situation. What a corner of life into which to bring more of the spirit of Jesus Christ! Do you know how many young men gave their lives in the last war? Suppose we could gather them all again from the graveyards of a thousand battlefields of Europe. Suppose they could march by the door of this Auditorium. Suppose they could begin tomorrow morning, twenty at a time, marching all day long without a break in the line. First, the dead of Britain. There they go, twenty at a time, dawn to sunset, not a break in the line, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday,—ten days for the British dead to pass in review! Then the dead of France. Twenty at a time, dawn to sunset, not a break in the line,—eleven days for them to pass that door! Then the dead of Rus-

sia. Great, strapping fellows from the plains of Siberia and eastern Europe, twenty at a time, dawn to sunset, not a break in the line, —thirty-five days for the Russian dead to pass! And then the dead of Germany. Those men loved life as much as you or I. They were sick of the war; they wanted to get home. There they go now, twenty at a time, dawn to sunset, not a break in the line, —forty-two days for the German dead to pass! If that parade of spirits began tomorrow morning, the 16th of July, it would take more than four months for it to pass that door! These trees, so glorious now with the green of summer and the singing of the birds, would be gaunt and bare, and the snows of mid-November would be sifting through the empty branches! That is the war's cost in human life. What a time to bring the spirit of Jesus Christ into international relationships!

In any discussion of world peace many well-meaning people miss the main point at issue. The main point is not theoretical pacificism. Most of us are inclined to think that there are times when men must fight: otherwise the will toward evil would have its unhindered way. Neither is the main point at issue immediate and complete disarmament. Most of us are inclined to think that in a world like ours, including bad men as well as good, we cannot safely dispense with all our weapons yet. But these are not the main points at issue.

What is the main point at issue? It is this: All of us know that in the next thirty years the life of the world is going to be reorganized along some line. Suppose it is reorganized along the old line, with racial bitterness, carefully fomented commercial rivalry, racial suspicion, and a pile of armament growing higher behind every frontier. You know what will happen in 1950: A little incident in some Sarajevo of the future, then a rush into war, and then with those deadly weapons of destruction given out by science, and the end of our vaunted civilization!

That is one road. Is there another? There is. It is a new road. In all these centuries of bloodshed no nation has ever explored its deep valleys and its precipitous heights. It is the road of deliberate, intelligent, carefully cultivated friendship. It is the road that may, please God, lead us and the boys who will have to die in the next war, if there is one, into lasting peace.

In such a situation has the church of Christ no responsibility? Let us do everything we can to make the world try the road of peace! Yes, let us strengthen as never before the agencies of international goodwill, notably foreign missions! Let us, above all things, train a generation that will think in terms of coöperation, not hatred: peace,—not war!

Do you know Vachel Lindsay's poem, "Abraham Lincoln Walks at Midnight"?

It is portentous, and a thing of state,
That here at midnight, in our little town,
A mourning figure walks, and will not rest,
Near the old courthouse pacing up and down.

A bronzed, lank man! His suit of ancient black,
A famous high top-hat and plain worn shawl
Make him the quaint great figure that men love,
The prairie-lawyer, master of us all.

His head is bowed. He thinks of men and kings.
Yea, when the sick world cries, how can he sleep?
Too many peasants fight, they know not why;
Too many homesteads in black terror weep!

It breaks his heart that things must murder still,
That all his hours of travail here for men
Seem yet in vain. Oh, who will bring white peace,
That he may sleep upon his hill again?

What a challenge to the church of Christ!

### Faith in a Living God.

Here is a third great task that we are facing. It is not enough to improve character. It is not enough to change social relationship. Somehow or other we must give this new generation faith in a living God.

Just now two new attacks on our faith in God are being made by critical young people.

Some of them say to us: "Granted there is an idea of God in the world. There used to be an idea of ghosts. The idea of ghosts produced enormous effects; the idea of God does the same thing. But there were not any real ghosts, and there isn't any real God."

Other critics say to us: "The term 'God' is a convenient way of summing up all the human efforts toward the good. 'Santa Claus' is a familiar term for the Christmas spirit found all over the world. 'Uncle Sam' is a convenient way of talking about

the patriotism of a hundred million Americans. But of course there isn't any Uncle Sam, there isn't any Santa Claus, there isn't any God."

This is what many young people are saying today. What are you going to reply? How are you going to meet those two new attacks on faith in God?

Suppose we say to these critical young people: "All right! We will suppose that you have found the truth at last, that the Christians of the past, Jesus included, have all been mistaken. Do you know how the world will look if there is no God? Over a century ago, Jean Paul Richter described a world without God. He wrote: 'I have traversed the worlds, I have risen to the sun, I have passed athwart the great, waste places of the deep: there is no God. Yes, I have looked into the abyss, where the very shadow cast by being dies out and ends. I have cried, Father, where art thou? But no answer came but the sound of the storm that raged on uncontrolled. There is no God. We are orphans, you and I. Every soul in this vast corpse-trench of the universe is utterly alone.'"

"Utterly alone"! Can you learn to control yourself on that theory? Can you try to build a new world on that theory? Can you face life bravely, face death unafraid, on that theory?

"Utterly alone!" That is a theory that will not work. We must find a way to live bravely and with unwavering hope. This theory makes it impossible to do that; makes it impossible to do what we must do. That is why many of us feel this theory must be wrong. The last argument against doubt is that it makes life unlivable. The last proof of Christian faith is that it makes life glorious.

What is our theory? It is this: "Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations! Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting thou art God!"

This is our theory. Why do we think it is true? Because it works. It makes it possible to live the kind of life we must live. With the courage men call faith, we reach out our hands in the dark, sure that sometime, somewhere, we will clasp hands with him.

O world, thou choosest not the better part!
It is not wisdom to be only wise,
And on the inward vision close the eyes;
But it is wisdom to believe the heart.
Columbus found a world, but had no chart
Save one that faith deciphered in the skies.
To trust the soul's invincible surmise
Was all his science, and his only art!

"To trust the soul's invincible surmise,"—that is the faith of Jesus Christ!

Howard Hermansen, Pianist.

Lotus Male Quartette.

Homer Hammontree, Chorus Leader.

# COMFORT CONCERNING OUR FAITH.*

## Rev. John A. Hutton, D. D.

In the first epistle to the Thessalonians, third chapter, second verse, are these words, "And sent Timothy, our brother and God's minister in the gospel of Christ, to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith."

Some one may ask, Why does any one require to be comforted concerning his faith? Is not faith itself the comfort?

Evidently even in the most radiant days of faith, when the very presence of Christ in bodily form was still hovering about the early church, there was need for this that the apostle speaks of as comforting people concerning their faith. However else you define it, faith is standing or falling by the noblest hypothesis that has ever been put upon life, and again and again those who have that high loyalty require to be comforted. How can we best show loyalty except to a cause which is in danger? How can we be loyal to a cause that is in danger without having at times our misgivings and relentings? How can we engage in battle without being war-worn and weary? And how must it not sometimes be inevitable that our souls should be shaken by misgivings, by something so appalling and horrible that—as Paul said,—it must not even be mentioned among us? What if all were error!

However they explain who would explain away the great things of faith, there is no doubt in the world, history and literature being the evidence, that with the coming of Christ something happened profound and moving, and yet subtle and deep in the human soul, something that must have had the bulk and moral magnitude of what we happily call the resurrection of our Lord.

When I was forecasting what I might speak about, this verse attracted me, and set me to looking into its context. I hold that the only honorable way to preach on a text is to preach out of the text in its context. A text out of its context is simply a pretext for a minister saying something which he was going to say if it had not been in the Bible.

St. Paul tells us that he sent Timothy to the Thessalonians to comfort them concerning their faith. When I look at the previous history of Timothy I find that really, from certain points of view, he was the last man that Paul should have sent on that delicate and important mission, because, in reading one of Paul's epistles to Timothy, I find that Timothy himself was very much in need of comfort, and that St. Paul in his own way comforted him. And yet, upon reflection, there is no man so competent to comfort others as is one who has known what it is to need comfort, and, needing comfort, to have received it. There are certain things you cannot speak about until you are there, there is a certain quality of interpretation of life which no man has a right to offer to a fellow man unless his own soul at the moment is rich with the recollection of it. Francis Thompson has a couplet which I think ought to be vividly in our minds, and placed where our eyes should continually fall upon it. He utters the prayer, "Let my tone be fresh with dewy pain alway!" I do not know where in any literature to find a word so baptized in spirit as are those words. Lord, let me always live in close view of those deep experiences from which, I thank thee, thou hast delivered me! Let me never be so far away from thee that I speak too harshly! However I may celebrate thy goodness in having delivered me from former travail, may I alway have such acute reminiscences of these profound experiences that my tone shall always be fresh with dewy pain! Yes! It was only my stupidity that thought it a strange thing that Paul should have chosen Timothy to convey comfort to the Thessalonians, because I see that the only man to send to those needing comfort was one who had himself been comforted.

When St. Paul sent Timothy to comfort the Thessalonians he was very reticent about his own feelings. Unless you take care you will not know what Paul suffered.

* Northfield General Conference, August 1923.

He will not speak about his sufferings, and you have really got to corner him and use your imagination in order to see the sufferings that underlay that so triumphant life. You will find that when St. Paul was in Athens he became so anxious about these Thessalonians that, although it was going to divest him of his sole companion, he felt he must send Timothy to find how they were, lest they should be disquieted by certain troubles. He was left alone. Then he went to Corinth. He had a bad time there. Corinth was an awful place. Whenever any of you ministers think the Lord has given you a hard bit to plow, read the Corinthian epistle, and you will never again blame the Lord for his providences towards you!

Paul was left in Corinth. There he stayed for a year, wrestling, wrestling, arguing and trying to persuade the Jews and Greeks that Jesus was the Christ. The Greek word used suggests that Paul was continually discussing and arguing and fighting and working, and making no progress! In that word you find a sense of the futility and hopelessness of it all. Then there is a change, as when the sun rises. In the next verse we read that Timothy came from Thessalonica and brought news from the church there. Paul was caught up by the word that was brought, and at once stopped discussing and arguing and debating. He "bare witness" to these people that Jesus was the Christ.

That is to say, we have a wonderful chain of events. Paul comforted Timothy. He sent Timothy to comfort the Thessalonians, and later the Thessalonians sent back Timothy, not indeed to comfort Paul, —that was not in their intention because they did not know that he needed comfort, but as a matter of fact the coming of Timothy from the Thessalonians was a comfort to Paul's heart.

You might ask, When did St. Paul comfort Timothy, and how did he do it?

If one reads between the lines in the Epistle to Timothy,—and that is the only way to read anything,—he finds that Timothy was having a bad time. I take it that he was a sensitive man. Probably he was a well-born man. Paul knew his mother and his grandmother, and he was

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brought up gently. After his conversion, which doubtless was through the instrumentality of Paul, he was sent by the apostle to a difficult field,—to Ephesus, or some other of those God-forsaken places in Asia Minor. I doubt whether, with all the squalor of today, there is anywhere such a depth of squalor as was in those Asiatic places in the time of our Lord. Timothy found that the whole place did not rise to the preaching of the Word. He made rather sinister discoveries as to himself. He found that he had his bad moods, that he had times when he almost regretted the way that life had taken with him. All that is a fair deduction from the imaginative, that is to say, the real reading of the epistle. He had written to St. Paul in something of these terms, telling him that he was finding things hard, wondering whether he was the man for that particular place, and in any case opening his heart to his father in God.

How did St. Paul reply to him? If he had been a smaller man he might have replied as small men are apt to do. He might have said, "Oh well, it is hard, very hard! Of course it is hard! Always was and always will be hard." Or he might have said, "Life is but a desert dream; heaven is my home,"—a perfectly right thing to say to certain people, and on certain occasions, but not the thing to say to a young man at the beginning of his ministry. Therefore St. Paul, being St. Paul, did not say it. Or he might have said, "I am sorry

I cannot do anything to help you, but I sympathize with you." There are those who consider that that is Christianity: a kind of reckless sympathy, and nothing more. I read of a man living in a country that was not under prohibition, who had fallen by the way. A fellow citizen was going home, and saw the man lying horizontal in the gutter. He had just enough sense to recognize him as a fellow man, and also to recognize what were the rudiments of human fellowship, but he was not in a condition to do any more.

"Well," he said, "I am sorry for you, but I cannot lift you up. But at any rate I can lie down beside you!"

One feels that somehow Christianity intends something more than that, and Paul, being the supreme exponent of Christianity, says more than that. What does he say? He says, in words that are rather poorly translated in our Authorized Version, "Endure hardness like a good soldier of Jesus Christ." That is good, but it is not so good as the original. Paul used a great word. I think it is a word that he manufactured. It is another proof of something original having come to the world with Christ and the Christian movement, that men like Paul had to manufacture new words to fit the new things that had come to the human spirit. He said, not "Endure hardness," but "Take thou thy share of hardness like a good soldier of Christ." It is as if he had said, "My dear sir, what did you join the movement for? Who led you to anticipate that the Christianity of the Lord is an easy thing? Where did you get the idea that Christianity is a soft and easy thing?"

I do not know where that idea crept into the current opinion of the world. It is the heresy of heresies to hold that one can be a Christian without sweating blood. Again and again, when certain people of an enthusiastic temperament came to our Lord, he advised them not to go any further. Again and again he said, in effect, "I advise you not to! At any rate, think it over!" He said that in order to be absolutely faithful to him it might be necessary for a man to do something as much against the grain as to take a knife and cut off his hand. And he added that if a man were face to face with a situation such that he must choose between a dishonor of his soul and the cutting off his right hand, it would be well worth his while to cut off the hand, without the slightest hesitation.

One may say, That is not easy. And that is why Christianity will always attract the world! "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." That is, "If I am once given the opportunity to show the human race what life can be, men will never after that be able to live as if I had not happened."

That is what St. Paul said to Timothy. One might say there is not much comfort about that, and yet there is. Nine times out of ten, when you and I think we require comfort, when we are sorry for ourselves, what we require is just a good shaking. We require to be made a little ashamed of ourselves. The Stoics said that the sense of shame was the basis of all the virtues. And it is the basis of all the graces. What is shame but a shuddering from a tendency found becoming too strong, a shuddering back into a loftier region?

St. Paul, having thus administered the medicine to this young man lest he be discouraged, did a thing so exquisite and beautiful and gentle as to make St. Paul the most womanly mind in the New Testament. There is a tenderness about St. Paul which I always associate with a good woman, a knowledge of the human soul in its more delicate states which I think only really good women have access to. Paul with his wonderful delicacy therefore immediately sends Timothy to Thessalonica to comfort the Thessalonians, to comfort them, doubtless, "with the comfort wherewith he himself had been comforted." So Timothy went to Thessalonica. He told the people there that he had been sent to comfort them, and he may have told them in an informal manner how Paul had comforted him. So he told them to take a new hold on themselves. If you would have men realize afresh what adhesion to an ideal cause must always involve, tell them to take their share of the hard things and not to be discouraged by troubles. In Moffatt's translation St. Paul says to Timothy, "Any good man who would live a religious life in this world will be persecuted." So he passed on this comfort,

"Take your share of hard knocks! Life is a hard thing for us all, but let us take our share! If you are not taking your share, some one else has more than his share. And not only take your share, but go and look for it!"

Let me quote a bit of doggerel:

If everybody were just like me,
What kind of a world would this world be?

You can say that to yourself with wonderful results, and even with most disquieting results if you apply it to the closer sections of your life, and say:

If everybody were just like me,
What kind of a church would our church be?

If everybody were just like me,
What kind of a collection would our collection be?

If everybody were just like me,
What kind of a prayer meeting would our prayer meeting be?

Now, perhaps some of you people from New England, with a reputation for intellectuality, might think that an appeal in doggerel is a rather low thing for persons of your intelligence. I can put it in more refined phraseology. Do you know that this is just a paraphrase of Kant's categorical imperative? Some who are quite up in that would be left cold by a little doggerel, but it is the same thing. Kant's categorical imperative is, "Every man must act in such way as that he could have no disquietude to conceive of every other body acting likewise in similar circumstances." I submit that that is just a learned and rather misty way of saying what I said, namely:

If everybody were just like me,
What kind of a world would this world be?

Take your share of hardness! I might rally the whole church and the whole world on that principle. We might have a great unifying party in the church and state who accept the principle of sharing in the failures of life. No man with a nice sense of honor will be satisfied without bearing his share, or pulling his weight, and something more. Why should we be sorry for ourselves, knowing that there is always a generation of children in the world not yet ready to bear their share, and a generation of old people too old to bear their share, and always a vast company of impotent folk, the blind, the halt, the withered, the delicate people of whom we ought to demand but little?

Now, there is a great deal of religion in words that have accompanied the human race for any length of time. Any word that has accompanied man in all his pathetic ups and downs for more than a century has a kind of taste of religion in it. This word comfort is full of religion. We rather misunderstand it. We think of smoothing a person down, of agreeing with him. That is not the radiant content of the word! To comfort a man is to make him brave as the result of bringing things to bear upon him which he at the time was neglecting. The idea underlying this word comfort is the wonderful value of putting two and two together. He is a poor man who cannot make more than four out of two and two; that means he has no personality. To comfort a man is to make him strong as the result of an addition which you bring to his mind when it is unduly occupied with one thing.

There was a surgeon in the Highland Light Infantry, whom I have a very tender reason for keeping in contact with. One day I asked him if he knew a certain officer. He said with perfect innocence:

"Yes. I was lying wounded in a hospital, and the doctor said, 'Look here, Dixon, I wonder if you would mind looking at a man next you who is pretty far gone? If I had a pint of blood, I believe I could pull him through.'"

It seems that, without knowing he was doing anything remarkable,—and that is the sort of thing that keeps God from bringing this world to an abrupt end,—this young hero allowed a pint of blood to be taken from his veins and injected into the veins of the other man, who lived in consequence. In his innocent way he told me he knew that other man, because he had a pint of his own blood!

My friend Dixon comforted that officer. Out of his own overplus he made good the other's minus. The other man needed something, Dixon had it, Dixon gave it, and the man lived!

St. Paul used a Greek word, parakaleo. Let me take a minute in trying to bring out the subtleties and beauties of this particular word.

"To comfort you concerning your faith." Parakaleo is composed of kaleo, to call, and para, aside. To comfort you is to draw you aside, to call you closer and whisper to you something that you are neglecting. It is to call you aside from your easy ways of living and thinking and conceiving of your duties. In this world these ways are always becoming lower and lower unless we take care, because there is a law of gravitation in the moral world and the world of sensibility. When St. Paul drew Timothy aside he did not whisper but shouted in his ear something that he was neglecting, and he comforted Timothy. And when Timothy went to the Thessalonians he comforted them by drawing them aside and telling them of things that they, in the states of their immediate experiences, were beginning to forget. And when Timothy went back from Thessalonica, bearing the message of affection to St. Paul, telling Paul how the Thessalonians were thinking of him as he was thinking of them, immediately he was comforted with the very comfort wherewith he had comforted others.

You and I have come aside. To have a change is in itself a great thing, because it is a great opportunity. Things will be possible for us all, in the way of thought, in the way of a certain finish to our thinking, in the way of relating one thing to another, and all things to a kind of view of life,—all that will be possible in these days of conference. Therefore it will be a serious thing if it does not take place: because a change that does not do us good does us harm, if for no other reason, because we are older, and the disappointment depresses us. You have come aside to hear certain things whispered. It is the counterpart of a whisper that the person into whose ear the whisper comes shall listen. I hope we shall all find time, in these days, to do some listening. Let us listen to the voices here which in this time of change bring us an unusual opportunity! Listen to the voices which in this place of sacred associations are apt for some of us to have an added resonance! Listen to the voices which in this particular place where the evangel has been preached for all these years, may encourage us if our most private thoughts should dishearten us as we contrast the thrill and glow of some earlier time with the commonplace gray skies that are all we can claim today! Listen to the voices heard in this place of holy memories, where nothing but the grace of God in various phraseologies has been declared as man's innermost possibility! If there come thoughts that would dishearten because old age feels that one's best days are past, listen to these voices, and in every moment when we are aware of sadness we may become blessedly aware of the remedy! And every hour when we feel how we have failed, we may turn to him who did not fail, for whose sake God sees no fault in us, and sees us, when our faces are turned towards him, as though we were already home.

I hope that in these days that lie before us we shall not only have come away with our bodies from our usual pursuits, but shall have come with our minds open, and our hearts fixed, and shall hear things that move us not merely from the voices of men, but, it may be, through the voices of men or through subtle processes in our minds,—shall hear voices that move us and give us that most blessed of all experiences, namely, the sense that, thank God, the best is yet before us!

"To comfort you concerning your faith." The danger is not that we lose our faith. Men lose their certainties. That is good for them, because all certainties are dead certainties. A thing that you are absolutely certain of is really a thing that you have no further interest in. No man ever lost his faith, any more than a drowning man who has hold of a belt would let go of it. A man's faith is what he lives by. The opposite of faith is not doubt or denial. It is in moods like this:—bitterness is the opposite of faith, impatience is the opposite of faith, censoriousness is the opposite of faith, suspicion is the black opposite of faith,—but above all, bitterness, the sense that life is a poor and paltry thing; and, in the case of some who have had the more tragic experiences, the feeling that life is a rotten and senseless thing. That is the mood and the tendency to which much in life prompts. Against it we pray to be safeguarded and underpinned by coming up once again to wait upon God.

# "AS FOR US, WE KNOW."*

## Rev. James Reid.

*And we have known and believed the love which God has for us. 1 John 4. 16.*

I want to take that verse from Dr. Weymouth's translation and read it this way, with the slightest alteration in the order:

"As for us, we know the love which God has for us, and we confide in it!"

I do not think you can find in all the Scripture a word that gets closer to the heart of religion than does this. If anybody comes to you and asks you to give a definition of what religion is, and what Christianity means to you, you could not give a better definition and explanation than just this, "As for us, we know the love which God has for us, and we confide in it."

It is a fundamental statement of Christian experience. We have been hearing much about "The Fundamentals." This is fundamental,—this rock on which a Christian man can take his stand, this spring from which he can drink, this secret of all the Christian's joy and peace and inspiration.

My dear brethren, I do not know what your outlook is on many things, and I do not much care. I do not even care, from one point of view, what your theology is. What I say is, that if you will make this confession of your faith you are there in religion, you are at the sources of everything. "As for us, we know the love which God has for us, and we confide in it!"

So I want to take you back to this elementary statement; for there is nothing more refreshing and inspiring to our spirit than to get back to some old spring from which we first drank the water of life.

Some of us may have spent our youth in country places. If we did, and if our memory goes back to them, we realize that as we wandered about those roads there was a little spring on the hillside where we used to stop and drink, and where we were refreshed, so that we went on our way gladdened. When we go back to visit the old home where we were brought up, we go to the old spring, and old associations come back, and we feel once more a child with life before us, and all the glow and music that perhaps we have lost come back into our spirit.

It is a great thing in religion now and again just to go back and be a child. In point of fact, Jesus says that if we lose the child spirit, if we cease to be simple and trustful and elementary in the great things of the kingdom, we are not in the kingdom at all.

Robert Louis Stevenson says that the most important matter in a man's life is to get into his second childhood, and as he grows older to grow continually younger. I believe that is true in religion too. The way to progress in religion is to grow simpler and more trustful. The more we get into the position of the child, into humbleness and trustfulness, the more we enter into the great secrets of God.

So let us try to be very simple and to take our stand on this elementary confession of experience. There are times when we can do nothing else, when the troubles and the difficulties and the doubts of life assail us in such wise that we cannot meet them but by falling back on this old experience. We do not know about these things, but one thing we know: we know that God loves us, and we trust him.

### How Do We Know?

Let us take the first part of the phrase, "We know the love which God has towards us." That is a wonderful phrase. How do we know it?

There are two words in the New Testament for "know." One means the knowledge of facts. You know that the grass is green, and the sky is blue, and the earth goes around the sun as its center. You know many things from reason and from argument and from what people have told you. There is a whole collection of facts that become thus stored in the mind and memory. We know them. That is not the word which John uses here. He uses a word meaning to perceive, to break through the surface of the fact into the divine meaning of the fact, to break through the outward crust of experience to the divine message that lies behind. It means

* Northfield General Conference, August 1923.

to perceive, to get the spiritual value, to see truth, to know a person.

You can know that a sunset is beautiful, you have listened to people talking of its beauty, but you may not know beauty, it may never touch you, you may never perceive it. There are plenty of people who know about Jesus Christ, but who do not perceive Christ's beauty and Christ's glory. They do not know them for themselves.

The old evangelists used to be very strong on this point. They used to say, "You must not only be saved, but you must know it." Wesley says that when he was first converted people used to come to him and say, "Do you know that your sins are forgiven?" An old Moravian pastor said to him, "Do you know that Jesus saves you?" Wesley replied, "I know that Jesus is the Saviour of the world." "Oh yes, but do you know Christ as your Saviour?"

That is the question I want to ask, "Do you know Christ?" There are many today who are interested in religion. People inside the churches and outside are interested in religion, but the sign-mark of the age in religious things is a mark of interrogation. We walk in the twilight, in a haze, on the frontiers; and people grope about to find their way in, but they are not there. They can sing, "How good to those that seek!" They know that Christ is good, for Jesus throws the shadow of his love over those who are standing outside the range of a sure knowledge of him. But they cannot sing:

> But what to those who find? Ah, this
> Nor tongue nor pen can show!
> The love of Jesus, what it is
> None but his loved ones know.

Do you know Jesus Christ with the knowledge with which you know a friend, heart to heart and mind to mind? Do you know God?

How does the knowledge come? In various ways. Sometimes suddenly, just as when dawn rises on the sea, and the sailor sees in a flash the land that has been hidden by the darkness. Sometimes slowly, like the gradual appearing of the land as we approach it from a distance. Sometimes in one way, and sometimes in another. Sometimes it comes in a flash of beauty from the world of nature into a man's soul. There is a story of a man who was converted and brought face to face with the knowledge of God, whose spiritual perception was quickened by seeing an old dead tree.

During the war a young Scotch soldier came to see me, and said:

"I want to tell you about an experience. I have come to know Jesus Christ."

"How?"

"I was walking down the road with my comrades, and we saw a little child. We began to talk to him, and asked him to sing for us. We supposed he would sing a music-hall chorus, but he began to sing a Sunday school hymn. Something immediately touched my heart, and the love of Jesus Christ sprang into it in all its power."

"What was the hymn?"

"I do not know, but now I know that I see Jesus, and I know of his love."

One thing we can say, that however it comes, it comes to us through a vision of the glory of Jesus Christ. That is why we call Jesus divine; not because we have any metaphysical theory about his deity, but because through his love and spirit he breaks the crust of unreality and of blindness that is on our spirits. When we look at Jesus the eyes of the spirit will open, and we can say:

"As for us, we know the love which God has for us, and we confide in it!"

There are many people who talk as if God could not be known. Many Christian people so talk. Many call themselves agnostics, and say, "God is the great unknown," and they are standing outside. There are people standing outside religion today and saying, "Show us a sign! Why does God hide himself?" I am not going to say for a moment that God can be fully known. Some talk like that. They talk as if they could know God with as much precision as a scientist knows the workings of a butterfly. God is infinitely more than our minds can grasp. But God has always been seeking to make himself known. Is there any better way in which God could have made himself known to us than by the means which he took? There is nobody whose light is so clear as the light of Jesus. Nobody is so approachable as Jesus Christ. No other has taken such pains to reveal

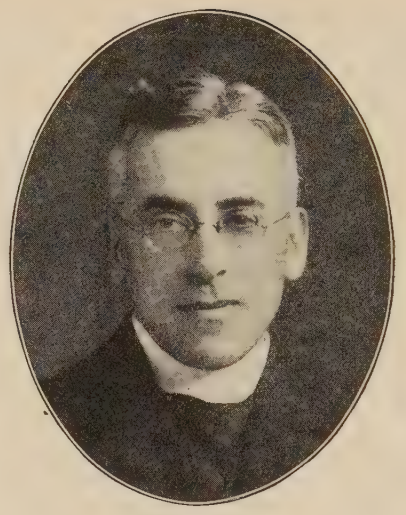
his heart and love and spirit as Jesus Christ did upon the cross. He is the most accessible of people. You have only to seek him, and you will find him.

We make a great mistake about religion. We think it is a problem to be solved, but it is not that: it is a gift to be received. We think it is a mystery to be tracked down: it is the offer of a friend to be known and loved, and a friendship to be accepted. The love of God is seeking us, and when we know it it fills our world with music,—it fills everything in our world: even the hammerstrokes of pain become a part of the melody of life.

That is how faith comes. "We know the love and we confide in it." Some talk about faith as if it were something you can pump up from the depths of your own being. They say, "O Lord, give me faith!" and they strive and work themselves into a fever to get more faith in Christ. That is absolutely wrong. Faith is awakened in us in response to the vision of the love of God. You cannot help trusting Jesus Christ if you see him, any more than you can help trusting a friend whom you love.

When a ship is wrecked, and the people go down to the shore and try to get into touch with it, they send up a rocket, and so fling a thin rope across to the ship. Those on the ship lay hold on it, and pull on it until they get a larger rope aboard, and then they pull on that until they get a still larger rope, and so the connection with the shore is finally and fully made. That is like faith. Faith springs up through what God does for us. It may be we have only a little vision of his love, and yet we can pull on that by trusting it until it grows bigger and bigger. That is because we are made for God and each other. Can you tell why the needle trembles to the pole, the tree roots seek the spring, the flowers seek the sunshine? It is because they were made so. If you have a little faith it is because you have but little vision of Jesus Christ, and if you have little trust in Christ it is because you are not giving up heart and mind to him.

That is our need today, to lie passive and quiet and receptive before the vision of God, with all our natures stilled, and all these shallow and artificial voices silent,



Rev. James Reid.

that we may hear his voice and see him. The world is suffering from far too much energy in some directions. It is all energy, like a clock running with the weights off. There is no power in it, it is just running down spiritually. What we need in spiritual things is passiveness, silence, quietness, until we apprehend the vision of God which awakens faith, faith that is used in service and love, and in a great trust. If you have no faith, go home and take your New Testament, shut the door and open its pages, and wait and wait until you get face to face with Jesus Christ, until that face shines into your soul! Then you cannot help trusting God, and you will begin to say:

"As for us, we know the love which God has for us, and we confide in it!"

### What We Know.

Now this is a fundamental experience, and it is on this fundamental experience that we can fall back before any assaults that meet us, as they often do, from the outside world. This is the rock on which we can take our stand when any flood of the world's troubles would overwhelm us.

Take the question of life's uncertainty.

We know that life is uncertain. That is part of the wonder of it. We are often being pleasantly disappointed, the world is often displayed before us in surprising ways, life is very wonderful sometimes. But on the other hand, life is uncertain, and that

brings a shadow. Life is a mystery. Some of us are wondering what lies in the future, or what lies across the frontier. People are much interested in that. Any minister can get a crowd if he will preach about what happens after death, even though he knows nothing about it. We would give anything to know what happens after death. People are groping after that knowledge, and there is no answer. Some are groping in spiritualism because they are pathetically seeking an answer to the great uncertainty of life, and we do not know. One thing we know: we know the love which God has for us, and we confide in it.

Or take the problem of suffering and pain and evil.

That is a great and so far insoluble problem. I believe that bit by bit we will find a solution. I do not give up the mystery of evil as one into which we will never see any further. God does lead us further into the mystery as we seek. One or two things we do know. We know that a man who gets into prison because he has poisoned blood and a bad environment is not there because it is the will of God. The man who lies on his bed in the sunshine this morning coughing his life away is not there because it is God's will.

A man said to me not long ago that he had just recovered his spiritual outlook. He had not been in a church for five years. His wife was in an asylum, and people had said it was the will of God. He was brought up to believe like that.

"But now," he said, "I see it was not God's deliberate will, and I have recovered my spiritual outlook."

And we see a man on a sick bed looking up into the face of Jesus Christ, in whose heart that face of Jesus Christ awakens a wonderful radiance. We know so much, but we know only a little way. The book of Job is a protest against short and easy ways of explaining the mystery of evil. Perhaps we do not know, I believe we do not know, just because the meaning is so big and wonderful that we cannot take it in. We just have to say we do not know. But when these great questions shoot their fiery tongues at us, we can say:

"As for us, we know the love which God has for us, and we confide in it!"

Or, again, take the many religious doubts and difficulties that are afflicting people today.

Some are much shaken and disturbed because of what the critics have said about the Bible. Some are much disturbed and shaken in mind because of the modern way of stating the old beliefs. They feel that the basis of their faith has been taken away from them. I have great sympathy with them. Some one has said that it is impossible to change all the furniture in the theater of a man's mental life in one generation. You cannot change it until you can change the outlook. But you can realize that these things are not fundamentals.

We are particular about our creeds. That is not what the world is keen about. It is keen about seeing that a Christian man lives on the creed he has, however long or short.

In my own country there is a beautiful modern church which cost about £250,000. It is a memorial church, and is built to look like one of the old cathedrals. I was admiring the great solid buttresses along the side of it, when a friend who was standing and looking at it with me said:

"That building is an architectural hypocrisy. It is all wrong."

"Why?"

"Because these buttresses were fashioned to support a stone roof, and they are not needed here because the roof is not of stone. They are all false."

The world is saying about the church that our creed is but hypocrisy, that it is there only for effect. The world is asking the church, "Is the work that you are doing or the life that you are living such that the creed is needed to support it?" We have to confess that it is not. We have to confess that the life we live and the work we do could be done by men often without any relation to Christ.

It is a terrific thing to believe our creed. "I believe in God the Father." Do we? Do we really believe that daring and revolutionary thing that God is our Father, and all men are our brethren? "I believe in Jesus Christ." That means for me that love is fundamental in the universe, and that the way of selfishness and self-interest and pride and worldly success is a way antagonistic to God's universe, and ulti-

mately is the way of foolery and death. That is what believing in Jesus as the Son of God means.

The question of statements is not the important question. Your creed is only a statement of your experience, and experience is the fundamental thing. And experience is a thing that does not change. Creeds will change. If you think creeds or statements have not changed, get a history of dogma, which is sometimes very dry, but is very important, and may be very interesting; you will discover how doctrine has changed and changed for 1900 years,—and rightly so. For what is the little cup of our mental statements to hold the infinite truth of God's love? The great thing is experience. That does not change. Nothing you can say about the Bible, no restatements, can change that. "As for us, we know the love which God has for us, and we confide in it." You are on the rock when you are there, and through all the centuries, through ten thousand times ten thousand hearts, that same conviction runs until it fills lives with music today.

### The Challenge.

Last of all, it is a great thing to fall back on this assurance in the face of all the disappointments that we find in our work.

"We know the love that God has for us," and it challenges us. It demands great things. If we know God is love, it means that we must spread it. If God's love is power with us, it means that we believe the love of God will have power with other people. A man who does not believe that the love in his heart can fill the heart and life of the poorest has never seen the love of God. So we have the foreign missionary enterprize, and the work of the church, and the work of saving and helping people. Again and again there will come times when we will ask ourselves whether it is worth while to go on; when we will ask, "How can this poor message touch the hatred and the cruelty of the world?" What can this message of a Christ on the cross do in changing the outlook of many people? When we are worrying and despondent because progress seems so slow, we ask ourselves if it would not be best to give it up and to take the Epicurean's creed, "Let us eat and drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die!" Then we look up, and say we do not know when the kingdom is coming, we do not know God's way, we do not know how God means to guide us, or to work it out, but we know the love which God has for us, and we confide in it!

No white man ever entered Tibet until a while ago. Colonel Younghusband led the first expedition of white men into it, and he tells us how it was done. He says that he knew the viceroy had selected him for the task, and he knew that if he got into a tight place the whole power of England was behind him to see him through, and so he went on.

That is like you and me in the face of our Christian duties and enterprizes, and all the hopelessness involved.

We know that God has sent us, we know that he knows our weakness, we know that the forces of God are behind us, and he will see us through.

We are like a ship sailing with sealed orders, which the captain is not to open for three days after leaving port. He does not know where he is to go, but he knows the man who gave him the sealed orders, and so he goes out. And you and I and the enterprizes of faith are like a ship with sealed orders. We discover the orders as we go on.

How many of us know Watts' picture of Hope? Watts depicts Hope as a female figure seated on a desolate world. The sky is dark, except for one star. She has in her hand a harp with all strings broken except one. She is sitting there with blind eyes, ready to strike the one string, which may break, and then there would be no more music in the world.

People say that is not hope, that is despair. No, it is hope! Hope is based on faith, and it means that even if there be only one string and one star, we believe that the star of God's light will lead us into the day, and that Christ's cross has power to fill the world with music. We do not know everything, and we are disappointed, but we know the love that God has for us, and in spite of everything we confide in it!

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Light somebody's torch, and your own will burn the brighter!

# WASTING AND RESTORATION.*

Rev. Melvin E. Trotter.

*And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmer worm, my great army which I sent among you. Joel 2. 25.*

Joel writes about how Israel had sinned, and the Lord had sent these plagues and wasted their years so that there was a terrible famine. Then he told them the way of restoration. This was quoted by Peter on the day of Pentecost. The book of Joel is a wonderful little book; however, I am going to leave it alone, and just ask you to think with me on the text, "I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten."

There is a time in everybody's life when he feels the need of restoration. It is God's plan to restore you and get you back where you ought to be. Many good people are drifting along. Some of you will go along until the last day or two of this conference before getting to the place of blessing. The reason I talk on a text like this is that we are at the beginning of a Bible conference. Why not try at once to see if anything is wrong, and look to God to restore us now? Many of us will never get anywhere until we do.

I was talking with Tom Smith of Chicago, the apple king. He showed me all his orchards, and it took three days,—he had 80,000 barrels of apples in his orchards last year. He showed me one tree that looked all right, but he said it was blighted. It looked all right, but it did not bear fruit. At a certain time in July, before the apples are any good, they fall off.

A lot of folks are in blight of soul like that. They have no song in their lives. They are without joy. Many folks rejoice over the gifts of God who have almost lost sight of the Giver. When one does that he is in blight of soul. One ought to be singing a new song of praises unto God. If you have no joy in your life you are an awful libel on Christianity.

When I was a boy I was told that if I would give my heart to God I would have to give up everything that I liked. I could not imagine anything worse than being like some people in the church; and I thought Christ was like that. But that is not Christianity! It is a blight of soul, to use a polite word. There is no fruit in one's life. In the New Testament fruit means character. In the Christian life you either go ahead or you do not go ahead. Are you growing in character? Are you better than you were ten years ago? Are you as good as you were ten years ago? Is God as real to you? Do you have fellowship with Christ as you did ten years ago, or are you standing still? Love, joy, peace,—all that is not service, but character. A blight of soul means that you are not growing in character.

Some one told me about a boy who had swallowed a penny, and for seven years he never grew at all, because the penny had touched some nerve that prevented his growing. When they X-rayed him and the penny was removed, he began to grow. Many a Christian has swallowed a penny. A little thing can stop your growth in grace. You may not lose your soul, but you do not grow, because of some little penny. A blight of soul is caused by something wrong that gets into the life. How many of you folks are having victory? Many believe that as long as they keep out of jail they are doing well. Keeping out of jail is good, but do you ever win any victory? Many people are not fighting, but the growing Christian has to fight. Do you realize that you and I ought to be out winning victories for Christ? The church used to lead in every fight. Today the church does not lead very much, and we are not winning many fights. We did get together on one proposition in this country, and we carried it over, but for the most part we are not winning victories. Men are not turning to us as should be the case. They turn to cults of various sorts, and everything else. I do not name these cults, because I do not want to advertise them.

### Wasted Years.

Then there is another trouble. The wasted years! "I will restore unto you

* Northfield General Conference, August 1923.

the years that the locust hath eaten." All time spent outside the will of God is wasted time. If your life is lived outside the will of God, you are wasting your time. I am not talking about open sin, but are you living in the will of God? If not, it is wasted years.

A great friend of this Northfield institution came to Christ when he was seventy-two years old. That old rich man, who really lived only after he was converted, said:

"I have wasted every year in my life until the last four years. I have been a great failure."

When you do not live in the will of God you do not live.

In Erie, Pennsylvania, I met the greatest checker player in that part of the country. He once went over to Scotland with the Americans who went to play checkers. Once when Mr. Hammontree and I were down in Florida, they put 54 men in a square, and he played them game after game. Two tied him, two beat him, and he beat all the rest. The next Saturday morning they blindfolded him, and put twenty-five of their best players to play against him. He beat all the twenty-five.

I said to him: "It is wonderful to play checkers like that!" "Yes," he said, "it is quite a thing." Then he walked me off alone, and said: "It is wonderful, but just think! Suppose I had put the same amount of time into something else! Since I was a little chap I have worked day and night to become an expert checkerplayer. I have spent my whole life in becoming a checker-player. Suppose I had put the same amount of work into something that amounted to something! I have never made the world better. If I could succeed so well in checkers I could perhaps succeed as well at anything else."

Many things that you think constitute success, God never counts at all. Many things that we do amount to nothing.

Talk about years wasted! When Abraham got "cold feet," instead of trusting God he went down to Egypt; and instead of giving God a chance to take care of him, the first thing he did was to lie about his good-looking wife. He lied to start with, and then he had to keep on living a lie. It was down there where he lied that he

Rev. Melvin E. Trotter.

picked up Hagar, the mother of Ishmael, whose descendants have caused a lot of trouble in the world ever since. Abraham spent thirty-eight years in Egypt, and God never counted that time for him at all.

How much of your time does God get? How much of YOU does He get? What he wants is you. Some of you will slip a dollar to him, and give him a little service, but has he got YOU? That is the question. How much time do you give him? Fifteen minutes a day? Get down on your knees while you are buttoning your collar, and say, "Lord, don't let me get hit by a Ford! . . . ." That isn't praying!

### The Way of Restoration.

But there is a way of restoration.

First of all you must recognize your sin, and deal with it.

If you are conscious of sin, you can get right back to the place where you are ready to hear God. Are you wrong with God? Have you had a hard year, and have things gone wrong? Have you come up to Northfield tired? Before we blame God for it, let us honestly try to see whether we are to blame in any respect! If you are going to get any restoration from the years the

locusts have eaten you must confess sin, of course.

A man who had been to a holiness meeting, and had been told that he could not get holiness until he had confessed his sin, came to me and told me that he had once stolen twenty-five dollars from me. He thought that telling me that was enough without paying back the twenty-five dollars. But I said:

"Hold on! Give me that twenty-five dollars if you want to get holiness!"

You don't confess your sin unless you make the wrong right. I wonder if you realize how little you do when you simply state that you have sinned. No, that is not enough! If you have stolen, say so and take back the thing you stole! Christianity is intensely ethical. You can make up your mind that you are not going to get anywhere with God unless you do the thing that will get you back to God.

You may say: "I don't know what is the matter."

Oh yes, you do!

In St. Louis a lot of business men were converted, one of them a big doctor. These men used to go out and hold street meetings and meetings in other places, and many more were converted. All at once the doctor lost his joy. Some one said:

"What is the matter?"

"I don't know."

On Saturday night these men held a prayer meeting in the doctor's office. When it came his turn to pray he did not pray. One said to him:

"Doctor, tell God all about it!"

He said: "I don't know what it is."

The other said: "You guess at it, and tell it to him!"

Then he prayed, and he hit it the first thing. He knew what it was all the time!

You know where you lost your Christ, and you can find him where you lost him. If you go back there you will find what caused your blight of soul and your wasted years. God will restore as soon as he can.

Notice another thought. There is somebody that you have sinned against.

If you want to be where you ought to be, you must make that right.

The one you have wronged is as dear to God as you are. When Paul and Silas were in prison, and God shook the prison open, the jailer said, "What must I do to be saved?" Paul and Silas told him, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Then the jailer took Paul and Silas into the house, and he washed their stripes. If you have wronged some one, if you have put stripes on some man or woman, wash those stripes! I want you to get something out of this conference. Make up your mind that if you have wronged any one you will go back and wash that one's stripes! Have you lied about somebody? God will give you back the wasted years as soon as you get to the place where you confess and put away the sin, and walk uprightly before God.

Let me show you the way back. You may read it in Joel, the second chapter and the twelfth and thirteenth verses:

"Therefore also now saith the Lord, Turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting and with weeping and with mourning: and rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God; for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil."

To get back to God, rend your heart and not your garment. To whom shall you confess? To God and to the one you have sinned against. Go as far in your confession as in your sin. If you have wronged somebody, go and make your confession to him and to God. He did not say, "I will put you back where you can begin to live again, or where you can go to work again." He said, "I will restore unto you the years."

You say, "That is putting a premium on sin."

No! I know a man who had been a saloon-keeper, but when he was converted he went to work at once, and led eleven people to Jesus within twenty-seven hours after he was converted. I was twenty-seven years old when I was converted. Just as soon as Jesus saved me, on January 19, Harry Monroe took me to his home, got me sobered up and straightened out, and within twenty-four hours I was going up and down the town telling the gang that God had saved me. And since then, thank God, I have had a lot of people come to Jesus!

Don't waste your years! Don't let blight of soul get hold on you! Get right with God tonight! Go out and let God use you!

If you do that, what will happen? He will restore unto you the years that the locusts have eaten, and everything will run over. There is nothing that God will not do for you. God sent me down to live in the slums. I do not believe that God is through with me yet. He will keep on using me until I meet him face to face, and lay at his feet the work he has given me to do. He must restore, he will restore, he does restore. Your part is to confess and put away sin, and appropriate the Lord Jesus Christ. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness!"

# PREACHING CHRISTIAN ETHICS.*

## Rev. Henry Sloane Coffin, D. D.

The Scriptures teach us what man ought to believe concerning God, and what duty to God requires of man. Having spent yesterday's hour on what man is to believe, we will turn today to the other side of it and talk about ethical preaching.

A fair indictment of a good deal of current evangelism is this, that we preach Christ, urging people to accept Christ, without giving them the content of what it is to which they commit themselves when they "accept Christ."

Let us use the illustration of the vine and the trellis. I have often thought that our characters are like a vine. The vine takes its shape from what it trains itself upon. That upon which character trains itself is an ideal. Ideals are furnished by the social environment, by the church in which we are brought up, by the teaching which we receive, and so on. What are the ideals which we hold up before our people? People can accept Christ sincerely, and yet have a vague notion as to what that involves for them as individuals, in the home, as friends, as men of business, as citizens. So one must be very explicit in his teaching.

One of my greatest difficulties is that we presuppose too much. We can assume almost nothing with many of our hearers. Many of them are young, and they have not heard the things that seem to us obvious. What is it to be a follower of Jesus Christ? We must convey this information to them.

Another indictment of the church is this, that people are as church members standing for nothing distinctive in the community.

You say that So-and-so is a member of the church. Does that in itself guarantee anything much? It guarantees, of course, that one probably will not be guilty of the grosser vices or do certain things regarded as outside the pale, but does it stand for anything distinctive in Christian character? Many of us content ourselves with looking after those who have fallen into the pit. We pull them up to the common level. They are as good as, but no better than, the people on the same block. That is one reason why the Christian church does not grip the generality of people today. There is nothing distinctive. We are not in advance of the ethical life of our time. So, following up what I said about preaching doctrine, let me now talk about preaching ethics.

### What to Preach?

In the first place, let us take up Christianity. What is the Christian ethical ideal, looked at from the point of view of the individual?

Have you ever spoken seriatim upon the fruit of the Spirit in Paul's letter to the Galatians,—a helpful way of treating it, because the very word "fruit" makes it essential for you to start with religion. First, the surrender of life to God, the incoming of the Spirit; then, and only then, ethics. That is the order in Paul's epistle.

Or, have you taken up the ideal of the good man under the law? Have you gone through Israel's law and shown what was the conception of the good man under the law? That is not a sufficient ideal for a Christian congregation, but take it with the Christian application.

Take the Ten Commandments, applying them to this day. I always find that when I take a course like that I am led to treat

* Northfield General Conference, August 1923. To ministers.

subjects which I otherwise would never take up. Here I have a certain number of topics, and I put under them certain themes that I probably would not think of preaching on separately. I would not think of devoting a whole Sunday morning address to the subject of gambling; yet under the subject of stealing you can bring in gambling as the prostitution of hope.

It is this specific dealing with what one ought to do that many good people need so much today. Our people want to be good, but they do not know what "good" connotes.

Or, take again an interesting line of thought, the idea of the good man in the Wisdom literature and in the Old Testament. Call it "The Way of Wisdom." In the "Wisdom of Solomon," and particularly in "Ecclesiasticus," you will find pungent and pithy sayings.

Take "The Way of Friendship," or "The Way of Wealth and Poverty," or "The Way of Hospitality," or "The Way of Courtesy." Collect the very interesting and suggestive sayings that are in the book of Proverbs on these themes. And of course you will not stop with them: you will turn over and supplement them with some of the exquisite sayings of our Lord or of St. Paul upon the same subjects.

Another line particularly helpful is to take the ethical sayings of St. Paul that you find in the conclusions of his epistles. Group them under headings, such as "Duties of the Home," and use that magnificent material which St. Paul furnishes, applying it to the relationships of American life today. My nearest neighbor in my vacation home in the Adirondacks is one of the most eminent ethical teachers in New York, Rabbi Adler. Recently he said to me:

"I think the most serious question before the American public today is not the industrial or the international question, but the question of the home."

After twenty-four years of ministry in the city of New York I agree with him. The ratio of divorce in the New England States is rising rapidly, and that thing is in all our congregations. Many of you know the heartache that comes when suddenly some man or woman of your congregation, whom you had supposed to be getting on all right, comes to you, perhaps after twenty years of married life and with grown-up children in the home, saying:

"We are not going to live together any more."

"What is the matter?"

So often the cause seems to be a trivial one! For the sake of our young people about to enter into marriage, for the sake of our people who may at the moment be having difficulties in the home, we ought to be very frank in our teaching of the moral obligations in the relations of husband and wife, of parents and children.

So far I have been dealing with Scriptural material. You were hearing yesterday about an eminent surgeon in the Harvard Medical School who was lecturing on operations. He said:

"Let me say to you young men who are going to be surgeons, Ask yourselves definitely these three questions: First, what is it I am trying to do? Secondly, is this method that I have hit upon efficient to do it? Third, is it worth while? Ask yourselves those questions before you do any operating."

Isn't there something in that for us who are trying to build up character? What am I trying to do? Have I sat down in the quiet of my summer vacation and tried to imagine my people as they ought to be in the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ? What would advance in Christianity mean for Mrs. A. or for Mr. B., or for this boy who is going to school or college? Visualize that need, then note what you want to put before them in order to their growth in grace, and handle things specifically!

Once I got my people to suggest their difficulties, and I worked out a course on the Christian's use of his time, his money, and other things. In that very specific teaching some people got vexed, but they were interested. They would come and say, "You had me tonight!"

Take the matter of a man's tastes. We say there is no accounting for tastes, that a man can be very foolish in his tastes and yet that has nothing to do with Christianity. But cannot tastes be developed, controlled and unified?

Or, take the matter of habits. Have you ever preached from First Corinthians, where Paul sent Timothy, and said, "I have sent him because he knows my ways, which are in Christ"? We say about a man, "Oh, well, he is a good fellow at heart! Don't mind his brusqueness! That is only his way." Well now, are a man's ways and his habits "in Christ"?

Preach on the subject of a man's body, his tastes, his mind, his habits,—the Christianizing of the whole man! Is not that the ideal of sanctification?

Now I come to something that is not so often treated, but which we must deal with today. I spoke yesterday of the type of people who leave our churches and go into Christian Science and similar cults. In a big city like New York some people, when they think they have anything the matter with them, run off and get a psychoanalyst to analyze them: and I think with usually damnable results. A girl of fine Christian character, in her early thirties, became infatuated with a young man who apparently did not reciprocate her affection. She went to a psychoanalyst, who said, "You have a repressed complex. Go and tell the young man that you are in love with him!" Imagine the young man's embarrassment, and the injury done to her sense of modesty! That is damnable tomfoolery, the things put over by people in the name of psychoanalysis. Now we cannot just sit down and call names. We must ask,—What is it that takes people to psychoanalysts, that Christianity could have anything to do with? Some of the cases the doctor should handle, not the minister; but there are many things with which we can deal. There is today a rapprochement between religion and science. In New York recently two ministers were invited to consult with eminent physicians with reference to this matter. They went, and the conversation was as to what the church can do to help the medical profession safeguard people from quackery. This is significant. We have a duty in this matter, though I do not think the doctors can hand it all over to the ministers.

Here are a few topics under this head. What has religion to do with fatigue? "They that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength." Does that have anything to do with physical strength? Have you read the chapter in Streeter's volume on the spirit, by an English physician, who points out that in most cases it is not that the spirit is willing and the flesh weak, but that the flesh is willing and the spirit weak, that there is not enough spiritual morale to keep the flesh going?

One of the things that pleased me most in connection with my own ministry in New York occurred during the influenza epidemic. A woman at the head of a nurses' hospital was working twenty hours a day, with an enormous influx of new patients, and many of her assistants down with influenza. After a few weeks of this thing she said to her assistant:

"I cannot stand this any longer! I must either go to a specialist or go to church."

She had not been a churchgoer; had not been inside a church for fifteen years.

On Sunday night she walked out. One of the nurses said to her, "You had better go to bed," but she went to church; to our church, because it happened to be the nearest. Afterwards she came to me asking to be received into the church. She said:

"I do not know what you preached about. I was just all in. But there was something about the hymns and the prayers and the atmosphere and the message that bucked me up. I did not have to go to bed. I went through the whole epidemic. And I think I ought to unite with the church."

It made me happy to think that there was something in Christianity that refreshes. "He shall drink of the brook, therefore shall he lift up the head"; "Rivers of water in a dry place"; "The shadow of a great rock in a weary land." What has religion, then, to do with fatigue?

Again, what has Christianity to do with nervousness? Is there anything in our religion that can cause serenity, repose, tranquillity? Can it help us to go to sleep?

Do you know a little book, "Outwitting Our Nerves"? It is very helpful to an ignoramus like me. It is written by a physician in southern California, and the literary flavor and religious flavor were assisted by a Y. M. C. A. secretary. It is a thoroughly religious book, a helpful book which can be put into the hands of people

who think they have not enough vitality to work in the church. What has religion to do with nerves? There is a large subject for a sermon.

Again, what has religion to say about fear? People are scared of all kinds of things. They do not think that fear is inherently irreligious.

Or take the matter of worry. A man says, "My wife is a great worrier," yet that woman may be a pillar of the church, teaching a Sunday school class, coming to the prayer meeting, but she worries, worries, worries. You have something to do in order to present that woman perfect in Christ.

Take the matter of disease. Don't we often let it alone and say it is the doctor's business? Should we not rather say, "Disease is not inevitable"? It is pretty likely to come to most people, however, and there is a Christian way of dealing with disease, and a non-Christian way. Do we from the pulpit teach the Christian way to handle disease?

Or, take such a state of affairs as is in our minds this morning. Here is poor Mrs. Harding, her husband just dead. What has a Christian to do in the face of death? There are various ways of handling the inevitable. There is the Christian Science way of saying, "God is good, and disease does not exist, and it ought not to be in the whole horizon." There is the way of forgetfulness. It used to be common to drink one's self into insensibility. Or you can plunge into business and sport, and forget things. I do not say it is not a good thing to have some means of taking your mind off, so that you do not brood, but that is not the Christian way to meet the inevitable. Then there is the Stoic way. Take so good a Christian as Sir Walter Scott. When he lost his property, and his wife and his grandchildren died, he went on bravely with his work, quoting a line from Shakspere, "If these things be necessities, then let us meet them as necessities!" But he confesses in his journal to having a hard time to get away from the grimness of it. It is a strange thing that a man with such access to the Christian Scriptures and Christian institutions seemed—perhaps it was only his reticence,—to have so little access to Christian sources of consolation. For consider Jesus' way of facing the inevitable in Gethsemane. Turn to the account in Matthew. At first Jesus says, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass away from me!" apparently casting about for some alternative. When he prays the second time this is given as his prayer: "O my Father, if this cup cannot pass away except I drink it," apparently facing the inevitable. But how does he face it? "Thy will be done!" It is God's will, something in which he has to coöperate. It is not like poor old Eli's prayer: it is not bowing one's self in the dust that the car of Juggernaut may roll over one. It regards God's will as something to be coöperated with: "and I will do it." So up he gets, and goes to meet the arresting officers. Is it not a part of our duty to treat a trial like that as we should?

How often we have an experience like this: Some member of our church knows something is the matter with himself, and perhaps he has a suspicion that it is something serious. He does not want to go to the doctor, but because his wife urges him he goes. The doctor, after careful examination says, "You have a cancer, and I cannot operate because it is too large. You have only such and such a time to live."

What we want is explicit teaching as to what to do in these circumstances, that we may present every man perfect in Christ. There is danger in preaching on some of these nervous troubles like fear and worry, because we are inept. But Jesus is a good psychologist. Those who follow closely the teaching of the New Testament will not go far astray. It is a wise thing to keep in touch with the physicians in our churches.

Or take pain. I know a good man, a brilliant minister, who was interrupted by a fatal disease from which he has partly recovered. He is in almost constant pain, which every now and then becomes so dreadful that he must quit his work for a while; and that is to go on until death comes. What is he to do? Is not the answer to that question a part of the teaching that we must give?

Now turn to social ethics, which do not need to be so much stressed today as might have been the case twenty years ago. Most of us are somewhat alive to the necessity of applying Christianity to social questions,

international questions, industrial questions, and all the rest. What is the church's contribution to this whole matter of social reconstruction? Let me line it up under four principles.

First, in the unrest of today in industrial and political and moral relationships, in the general restlessness of our time, the first duty of a Christian leader is to sympathize with that unrest.

We cannot be among those who say, "There is nothing wrong! Settle down! Take things as they are!" After all, Christianity is in this world to change it. Therefore, if people are discontented with things as they are, thank God!

Secondly, our duty is to spiritualize that unrest.

You have read about the Labor leader in Great Britain who said that the Labor party there has not sufficient power in itself to manage the movement. This is a fortiori true. There is a lamentable lack of spiritual power. The difficulty with a large part of our labor movement is that it is just as selfish as the capitalist movement. On both sides we must change the emphasis, and teach that a man's life does not consist in the abundance of things that he possesses.

In the third place, (and this is where we often fail,) we must present as explicitly as we can the application of the spirit of Jesus Christ to the various social relationships in which people find themselves.

In the fourth place, preach that God is behind social operations! The unique contribution of the church is always religion. We preach him who sits on the throne, who is able to make all things new. We shall never get decent industrial and international and home relations except in union with him. That is our major point.

Now go back to the third point, teaching explicitly what the spirit of Jesus Christ demands today. Is it not a reasonable complaint from business men and laboring men that we do not do this? They say to the preachers, "You hold up an ideal of brotherhood and justice, and paint Utopia, and that is good. It puts something on the horizon toward which we may work. But here am I with certain responsibilities. I am a manufacturer, and here is a certain amount of capital invested in my business, and I have responsibility to my stockholders. And here are employees whom I must try to keep employed. I must keep this concern going. You preachers say competition is not a Christian method. What shall I do?"

The present industrial order has three unchristian factors: cutthroat competition, men who work for what they can get out of it, and those who hold that what they earn is theirs to do with as they please, provided they do not break the laws of the land. Over against these put up the ideals: Christian coöperation, service, what you have is not your own to do with as you please.

Here is a manufacturer. He will not live to see the day when competition will be eliminated. He has twenty-five more years in which to do business. What will you advise him to do? Remember St. Paul. I do not think that St. Paul liked slavery, but Christianity did not strike a forthright blow at slavery. If it had, it would have been suppressed as a Bolshevistic and radical movement. It could not attempt to alter economic conditions before altering the spiritual factors operating in society. Paul gave advice to the slaves and to the masters as to what to do under existing conditions. So we must take the existing social order, and look at it in this light: What is the more Christian industrial law? Not, what is Utopia? What is something to which we could get our people to advance within the next few years? Here let us talk frankly to our people. What is the Christian's duty today as a producer, as a consumer, as an owner, as an investor, as an employer, as an employee? Our people want advice, they want help. Dives is not sitting there in the pew just angry at you, and Lazarus wants to know what is the law for him.

We cannot content ourselves with Utopian denunciations. That is the trouble with much preaching in this country. Men hold up the ideal, they are strong in denunciation of things as they are. But here are people who are caught in the toils. You cannot scrap the whole international fabric and then build up a new international order. You must take what we have, and evolve something better. Evolution rather than

revolution is the order of Christianity. It is so in the New Testament. The gospel is not dynamite, it is leaven. Many who want to smash the whole fabric seem to me really out of line with the spirit of Jesus Christ.

Sometimes I think of the problem of the engineers who built the new Grand Central Station in New York City. They were told to build a great deal bigger station than the old one, but while doing it to keep all the traffic moving. Is not such as that the problem for us as a nation? We want to move into a more Christian industrial order and a larger international and racial fellowship, but we cannot scrap things as they are. Let us have the ideal with all its purity and glory, the city of God on the earth, but show the people the correct steps to it! That is the social and ethical preaching needed today.

### Three Dangers.

There are three dangers in ethical preaching.

First, a lot of men get so interested in this new industrial order that they preach ideals pretty generally. Perhaps you have heard some man, especially a young man, discussing subjects like better housing, or better food, or the transit situation, and you have gone away feeling that there was no message in that preaching for you. A sermon is something concerning God, and if you have not through the proper treatment presented God to the people you have not preached. First of all our message is God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Secondly, there is the matter of denunciation versus teaching. Ministers hold up Amos and other Old Testament prophets as an example. But Amos was not a pastor. He did not speak to the same congregation every week, year after year. You could not stand Amos Sunday after Sunday along that line. At least, if Amos had had your particular problem he would not have preached just that way. Amos came like a whirlwind, gave his message, and went away. I doubt whether the average congregation needs a prophet fifty-two Sundays in the year. It needs a friend in the pulpit who is compassed about with the feeling of their infirmities, and knows what they are up against, and talks to them naturally and frankly about the thing they share together. That is pastoral preaching. As I get older I am not so awfully keen on flaming denunciation. Once in a while it is necessary. The Spirit of God comes on you, and you feel that you have just got to fight. But it cannot be continuous: otherwise you become a public scold, and a nuisance. Some men have wrecked their ministries just that way.

Third, is our fondness for vague generalities versus specific principles. In saying that I am talking as many of our laymen feel. They believe in justice and brotherhood, but what they want to know is how they as Christians are to achieve these ideals. We are not doing our duty unless we are as specific as Paul was with Philemon. "You have been a thief. Now, what are you going to do? You are a slave, and what are you to do?"

## THE VENTURE TO CHRIST TODAY.*

Rev. G. Hartley Holloway.

*Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water! And Jesus said, Come! And Peter . . . . walked on the water, to go to Jesus. Matthew 14. 28, 29.*

And I believe we shall find Christ today where Peter found him of old, at the further side of a big venture of faith. Out of one's depth to Christ would seem to be the way of his discovering in all ages.

May I set this old story against the background of our present world situation? Is there no challenge in the times? Or is Christ still calling to us across the deep waters, "Come"? And if so, what of our response?

Edmund Burke defined the state as "a contract in which three parties are involved: the dead, the living, and the yet unborn." When you take life seriously, and begin to think about it at all deeply,

* Northfield General Conference, August 1923.

that is what gives it, in a day like this, an almost overwhelming sense of responsibility,—that we are in very deed standing between the dead and the yet unborn. Of course, in a sense that was, and is, always true, but perhaps never so vividly nor so overwhelmingly as today. And our responsibility is here,—it is twofold,—lest by our apathy or our indifference in this present we may betray the past and barter away the future, and by our unwillingness to respond to the challenge of Christ in our day with something of daring and self-abandon we may sell again the Son of God for our selfishness or our safety.

The better world of tomorrow, of which our best and bravest dreamed, and for which they died, is now in our keeping, a trust red with their rich blood. We have lived through the end of an age. If the new world, liker the kingdom of God, is ever to come to life, we who name Christ's name must have some part in its creating, and some share in the travail that alone can bring it to the birth. We stand today on a world-scale very much where the disciples of old stood,—with a ghastly night of failure behind us, black with nightmare and alarm, yet with a new day dawning before us, full of promise and pregnant with infinite possibilities for good. Between the two stands Christ, and as of old he meets us with a challenge in the very days in which we are set.

It doesn't need any great prophetic gifts in order to see that this world of ours has somehow gone wrong, and finds itself entangled in the meshes of an ugly and evil spirit from which it is not easy to break loose. The purifying fires of war, as they were called, have consumed much of our dearest treasure, but have left behind little but the charred remains of ruin and wreckage. Materialism has not perished in the flames. The spirit that brought this evil thing on us is not dead. Never was such materialism as today! Never were such hatreds and such bitterness! Man against man, class against class, and far-off rumblings which remind us that war itself has not yet become the loathed relic of a bygone age.

These are not the empty foamings of small-souled pessimists: they are the sane findings of some of our greatest prophets;

Rev. G. Hartley Holloway.

and with them few thinking men will be inclined to disagree. Of course, we knew that "the child of war, no matter to what ideals it may have been mated, will always be unrest." But apart from that altogether, we are living in a disillusioned world.

Writing in the "Hibbert Journal," Miss Evelyn Underhill describes our civilization today as "existing under a cloud, like a neurotic man whose sickness has no name and few definite symptoms beyond general uneasiness and loss of hope. Impotent and uncertain of aim, society is becoming more and more querulous, and less and less reasonable. Sometimes it seeks violence and destruction as the only cure for its state. Sometimes it tries grotesque and superstitious remedies. Sometimes it relapses into apathy."

Others of our modern prophets give the modern malady a stronger and more definite diagnosis. No less a seer than Prof. Gilbert Murray of Oxford, whose work for the League of Nations in connection with the white slave traffic has put not only the Christian world, but the whole of civilization in his debt, writes in a recent number of the "Contemporary Review" that "the war has filled not only Russia but most of Europe with the spirit of Satanism." And he continues, "I see few signs so far of a change of heart in public things in any nation in the world; few signs of any rise in the standards of public life, and a great many signs of its lower-

ing. Yet I am convinced . . . . that unless the world order is affected by this change of heart, the world order is doomed."

Is there no challenge in these words for us? Isn't that the clear call of Christ to his church? Isn't that change of heart the central fact of our experimental faith, and its continued accomplishment the one thing that makes the church something more than a social and religious debating society? Haven't we come into our kingdom for just such a time and such a task as this?

Professor Gilbert Murray's words remind me of a phrase of Ibsen's to the effect that what the world of his day needed was not a "political revolution," but "a revolution in the spirit of man." As I understand it, that is Christianity, for Christianity is a religion of revolution,—revolution all the deeper and more far-reaching because based not on force, but on love; working its mighty results in the interior and secret spirit of man; working from within out; to the changing of the world and the bringing in of the kingdom of Christ. Applied Christianity began with a few unlettered and simple men, who by that means are frankly acknowledged even by their opponents to "have turned the world upside down, saying that there is another king, one Jesus." That change of heart was central to the faith of the early church. To a like faith, working with like results in our modern world, is the call of Christ to his church today.

We've tried so many other things. We've tried almost everything else. We've sought for some new remedies, when all the while the only effective remedy is a very old one. In our shell-shocked, disillusioned, distracted world the church holds the one secret. The one leader not discredited is still the church's Lord. Jesus Christ is the solitary hope of our poor humanity. Men are turning to him everywhere with a new and pathetic wistfulness. It's time we took up his challenge and responded to his call. "Revolution in spirit" is the old and only secret, and to that the church is committed in the name of her Master. In so far as she forgets or neglects it, she is guilty anew of the great betrayal.

Only last week I came upon a parable which is not far out as a picture of our world today.

It tells of an Arab who sent forth his sons to get learning wherever they could. They came back after four years, and he took them into the desert and showed them something.

"What is that?" he asked the eldest son.

"Why, the bones of a tiger," was the reply, as the boy examined them. "His age when he died was seven years and three months. His length from the tip of his tail to the tip of his nose was seven feet nine inches."

The father was surprised, and turned to the second boy. "And what can you do?"

The son quickly built up the complete skeleton of the tiger, and set it up on the desert sands.

"What can you do?" the father asked the third son, still more astonished.

The third son stuffed the tiger, covered it with skin, and put eyes in its head.

"There is nothing more to be done!" mused the father.

"Wait a moment!" said the fourth boy. He stood in front of the tiger, uttered magic words, sent a blue spark from the tip of his fingers into the tip of the tiger's nose. The tiger rolled his eyes, opened wide his mouth, made a mighty spring,—and ate them all up!

Isn't that our modern position, and the result of the civilization we ourselves have built up? We've been hoping that by long and slow processes we were achieving to let the ape and tiger die. We've tried to educate the tiger, we've attempted to tame the tiger, but we haven't succeeded! The evil spirit is still with us. We know now that evolution won't save us. We've discovered that all movement is not necessarily forward, nor upward. We've found that it is possible to pass from the ape and go to the devil, and that our complacent ideas of an inevitable and necessary progress are rather wide of the mark. Though be it said that even the dean of St. Paul's has indulged the hope that "if by the process of evolution mankind could let the ape and tiger die, mankind might ultimately succeed in suppressing the donkey"! A most sanguine hope for the gloomy dean to have voiced! Well, be-

tween the devil and the donkey, between our silliness and our badness as revealed by our modern civilization, where are we? I venture to think we are exactly at the point where Christ can meet us and deal with us,—if, indeed, there is any point in experience at which he cannot! Revolution in spirit! I repeat, we've tried everything else in vain! You can't educate or tame an evil spirit. It is the glory of God to convert a thing. In that is our only hope! It is the challenge of Christ to his church today. It is Christ saying, "Come!"—saying it to us! And nothing less than a great uncalculating venture, in selfless and sacrificial response, will be worthy us, or our church, or our Lord. But given the venture, on the further side of it we shall discover Christ with the difficult, baffling waters under his feet—and ours!

### Modern Difficulty.

For see the picture! To Christ walking on the sea Peter answered and said: "Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee upon the water!" And Jesus said: "Come!" And Peter . . . . walked upon the water to go to Jesus.

Doubtless to the modern mind there are innumerable difficulties connected with this incident of Christ's walking on the water. If I do not spend any time in discussing them, it is not because I am unaware of their existence, but because I believe such questions are for the classroom, and further because I feel that there is a message of greater importance which is independent of all such criticism.

To the minds of our forefathers miracles were an aid to their belief in Christ. They believed in him because of his miracles. Our point of view has somewhat changed. I believe in miracles because I believe in Christ. All things are possible to him who so believeth! The impossible is possible for him who really believes in Christ.

Nor do I find it difficult to believe in miracles, because they are always happening. To him who goes with God, all the way is wonder. If you cannot believe that Christ once walked upon the water, may I remind you that he has been doing it all down the centuries,—treading under foot hitherto unmastered elements, walking upon deep and erstwhile untrodden paths? He has ventured where others have been able to find no sure footing, and on deep waters he has made impossible progress. The vindication of all these miracles is in history and experience. I can believe in the Christ of the Gospels because I see him with us still, and still where he is the impossible happens. There is for me only one comment in the presence of such a miracle as this:

"Impossible! Only I saw it!"

"How could Christ walk on water?" I don't know! This I do know:

> Yea, in the night, my soul, my daughter,
> Cry,—clinging heaven by the hems;
> And, lo, Christ walking on the water,
> Not of Gennesareth, but Thames!

The Christ of history is the Christ of experience, and so does the new gospel verify the old! Certainly the miracle we are considering is a parable in action. And the situation is one that reproduces itself in every age, not least in our own.

### The Disciple's Imperative.

"Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee upon the water!" It has been generally supposed that Peter is to blame for presumption. He has been condemned for such a foolhardy tempting of providence. Is this Peter at his best, or in one of his worst moods? Is this the old, boastful, unreliable Peter, making rash promises that he did not and could not keep? So it has been said, and so it may appear, but I believe that is to miss the true inwardness of the scene. A look beneath the surface will reveal something more.

A great and saintly scholar has said that here we have an exhibition not of Peter's love of display, but of his love of Jesus. Peter is revealing the true disciple's only possible attitude to his Master,—willing to venture himself on deep water at the bidding of Christ. For mark you Jesus said, "Come!" And when Peter came, and failed, the Master's comment was not, "There you are, Peter! Now you see what comes of being so over-confident!" Not that, but, "Now you see, Peter, what comes of not being confident enough! O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou falter and doubt?" And my purpose this evening is not merely to justify Peter, but

to suggest that in his venture over deep waters he reveals the true disciple's only possible attitude in response to the call of Christ. We are all under imperative to risk unfathomed deeps for such a Master as Peter's and ours!

For it was Christ himself who inspired Peter to make this venture. There was something in the Master which made the disciple willing to hazard everything for sheer love's sake. And I fancy we shall only really discover the deep meaning of Peter's fine, foolish venturesomeness as we discover it in Christ himself. For he who bids Peter come to him on the water, himself is walking on the water. The familiar voice said, "Come!" and Peter went.

Now leaving Peter, think for a moment of Jesus in the light of this incident! Isn't the picture of him walking on the water a summary of his own life's venture? Isn't that what he was always doing? Jesus was always going into impossible situations, meeting and mixing with impossible people, doing impossible things, and speaking words that were counted impossible with men. He did it all unhurt and unhindered. He appeared to be unaware of the difficulties. He left the confined shores of accustomed and practical safety, and ventured boldly forth, walking on the water.

Sane people said he was mad, good people said he was bad. But he did it! In this faith he lived, and in this faith he died. For all time he has proved the possibility of the impossible.

Now, men and women, Christ has not changed. The tides of time have ebbed and flowed, the deep waters may have changed, but not Christ. He still calls to us to come to him walking on the water. What sort of a show do we make in response? How do we stand the test of our Master? I will put it in two words: (1) His is a call to attempt the impossible; (2) and his is a call to venture and daring. How do our lives stand that twofold test?

(1) The soul that has come mightily under the sway of Jesus believes that he calls us to attempt and makes us capable of doing impossible things.

"What do ye more than others?" said Christ to his disciples. Anybody can do the possible. The vindication of our faith is still that at the call of Christ we attempt the impossible. Peter was a fisherman. He knew the difficulties of walking on water, the impossibility of it: but at least he tried it at the bidding of Christ.

Doing only what we can is the curse of so much Christianity today. The fault of the church is that we are afraid to attempt more than we are sure we can achieve. In New England there is an epitaph upon a woman's grave, and it is this, "She hath done what she COULDN'T." That is the faith which is victory, and unless Peter and the early church misunderstood their Master and misinterpreted his spirit, that was to be the Christian's distinction, his willingness to attempt the impossible. No man has a faith big enough to allow of his greatly believing in Christ and the impossible at the same time.

It was only such a Master who could inspire Peter for such a venture. Had John or Thomas called him, "Come to me on the water," would Peter have ventured it? Of course not! A man needs a big inspiration for a great venture.

You can measure the inspiration in terms of what it produced not alone in Peter, but in the early apostolic church. You may be foolish enough to deny the truth of this incident of Christ's walking on the water, but you cannot deny the spirit of the early church. The fact remains that this is the sort of impression that was made on the minds of the disciples. Christ inspired them somehow to attempt the impossible, and they did it.

Come back to the beginning! Here is Christ dead. What of the disciples? Do they admit their delusion as to him, and own their mistake? Not at all! Within a few weeks of the crucifixion they are preaching the utterly "impossible" doctrines of the resurrection in the very city that had crucified him. They were declaring that in the name of the Crucified they were out to conquer the world. Knowing Rome and Jerusalem, such talk was absurd, but the impossible had happened. Christ was risen. The day of Pentecost had fully come. This was the greater miracle. That early church gloriously triumphed over the impossible, and so it continues to this present. The whole story of the early church, and of its mighty triumphs all down the

ages, is just the story of the slow passing of the impossible at the bidding of Christ. The true apostolical succession is in the long line of men who feared no waters, howsoever dark or deep; men who held back from no peril, who were willing to stake their lives for the faith of Jesus.

How do you account for it? Only in Christ. The sole inspiration was in him. Was it faith or love? It was both. They gave birth to hope, together.

All of you who have caught the vision of Christ, and have discovered something of his way and will for you, will agree with me that probably the greatest obstacle in the way today is the practical, careful, nicely calculating man, the man with the measuring rod in his hand, the man whose only God is possibility. We know him in our national and international councils. We know him in our churches. We know him in our own hearts.

"When they say 'Impossible!' push them aside," says H. G. Wells, in speaking of our dreams of a new and worthier world.

Young people, don't allow your idealisms to be trodden under foot or ruled out of order by any committee! Do not let your dreams be relegated to some lumber room with other articles not required for immediate use! To your dreaming add a holy daring!

The practical, careful, nicely calculating man whose only God is possibility will soon find himself out of his depth if he tries to follow Christ. He must either turn back, or learn a faith mighty enough to enable him to walk on water. In the true disciple's dictionary, the word impossible can have no place. Says Carlyle, "When all men have said, 'Impossible!' then know thy time and possibility have come."

I will search for what never was found:
For the height, and the light, and the glow
Of impossible things I am bound:
For glory comes so.
If I miss them, at least there's a bliss
Which within me is silently wrought:
I am better and nobler for this,
O my soul, that I sought!

(2) The call of Christ is a call to risk and venture.

"We must follow what we think right quite recklessly, and leave the issue to God," said Donald Hankey. But isn't that just where our faith fails? It fails on the side of courage. Doesn't it lack the spirit of reckless venture and daring? The tragedy is that people outside the church are willing to risk more for worthy causes than we inside are willing to venture for the worthiest cause of all. I think it is Chesterton who tells us that courage must find a place in the kit of every Alpine climber. It must certainly find a place in the make-up of every man who would follow Christ today. The hardest thing for some of us to do is to burn our boats behind us, and venture forth. Yet therein is our only safety. To have cut off any means of retreat is a wise safeguard in the interests of an increasing faith. The man who plays for safety has not fully appreciated the call of Christ. Who chooses Christ "must give and hazard all he hath." But we don't. We cling to our securities and sit sheltered in the boat while Christ calls those who have ears to hear to venture forth to him on the water. How we cling to the boat! We've no intention of ceasing to be his disciples, but we show an unholy preference for the boat: the average Christian displays extreme reluctance to leave it.

But suppose we go under? Well, underneath are the everlasting arms! Better to fall into the arms of God in a daring venture for Christ than sit secure, unresponsive to his call!

"Only the adventurous church will save her soul alive, and in doing so will save the world. The adventurous church does not scheme or calculate. . . . . She lives by her vision of God. Her only policy is to follow her Lord," to follow him not merely to Capernaum, or up the mount of the great sermon, but even through the dark agony of Gethsemane and to the brutal cross. When he says, "Come!" no matter how dark and deep the waters, we must make the venture. To remain secure in the boat is to be separated from him. To venture to him on the water is to find him.

It is for a new consecration to Christ that I plead; for a faith that will admit no dream too good to be true, and for the sheer bravery of faith that will be willing to make a selfless venture for a better church, a Christlier civilization, and the new world coming to the birth.

# REALITY FOR UNREALITY.*

## Rev. Lionel B. Fletcher.

In Isaiah, 35th chapter and 7th verse, it says in the old version, "The parched ground shall become a pool." It says in the Revised Version, "The glowing sand shall become a pool," while in the margin it says, "The mirage shall become a pool." Then it adds in the Revised Version, "In the habitations of jackals, where they lay, shall be grass, with reeds and rushes."

Among the beautiful literary gems which Isaiah gives us there is none more beautiful than this 35th chapter. I have lived in the tropics, when it has seemed as if the whole of nature had been burned up with the ferocity of the heat. I have seen the land so parched that all the plant life and even the bird life seemed to have nearly withered away. And then on the horizon have appeared mighty storm clouds, which eventually rolled like purple chariots across the sky. Then followed the forked lightning, the roaring and crashing of the thunder, and the terrible rain. I have lain in bed while the house has trembled beneath a storm like that. But when we woke in the morning we have found nature washed and purified and beautified. The faded flowers seemed to lift up their drooping heads, the dust on the leaves had been cleansed away, the birds had found a new song, and the glory of refreshed nature was something beyond description.

If you look into the 34th chapter of Isaiah you will hear the rolling storm, the sighing and sobbing of the wind, and the crashing of the thunder, and you know that the prophet in the name of God is telling the people of the punishment of their sins. Then we turn into chapter 35, and find it like the morning after the storm: something so beautiful and wonderful about it as to be past description.

There are passages in the Bible of such beauty and spirituality that even the scholars have not got down into the full depth of them yet, and this is one of those passages. The 35th chapter of Isaiah throbs with spirituality, in every stanza of it, unfolding the love of God. You must remember that as Isaiah spoke to these people he spoke in the figurative language of the East, which we of the West need translated to us, but which they of the East knew and understood. The ordinary man takes up the old version, then he reads the Revised Version, and then he reads the margin, and he says, "These cannot all be right." But they are all right, only one is a little more right than another.

When the war was on I used to go among the Australian soldiers, and if they were looking homesick I would talk to them just as they were in the habit of talking to each other, and they would sit up, and soon begin to smile. It was the sound of the tongue that reminded them of home. The deep things of religion come to us best in the tongue we understand. And when you see in the old version, "The parched ground shall become a pool," and in the Revised Version, "The glowing sand shall become a pool," and in the margin, "The mirage shall become a pool," you simply see how men who did not know Eastern conditions were trying to find the right expression for the Hebrew figure of speech.

The word means, in literal English, "sun-soaked soil,"—the earth saturated by the sun's rays.

The first translators were men who had never seen sun-soaked soil. Over in England it is rain-soaked soil! There we have fogs all through the long dreary winter. So they pondered on this Hebrew word. What could it mean? And they made a good attempt at translating it, "the parched ground."

In 1881-2 translators from various places got together for the revision. America gave some of her scholars for that great work. They came to this word again, and they concluded that it meant more than "parched ground,"—it meant the shimmering heat from sand hills, with the wonderful effects thus produced. So they put it down, "glowing sand." Some of the scholars insisted that "mirage" should go into the margin: and that is really the literal translation, giving the figure used by the prophet and readily understood by the people of his day.

The true picture comes to my mind because I have lived in a sub-tropical country, and I know the prophet's illus-

* Northfield General Conference. August 1923.

tration. It is a beautiful and wonderful illustration. Some of you too have seen a mirage. I will tell you where any one can see the beginning of a mirage. Look at an iron roof or a tarred pavement on a warm, clear day, and you will see the shimmering heat rising up. When that takes place, all the factors needed to produce a mirage are present, and the mirage may not be far away.

Once during a voyage we were sailing along the south coast of Australia, where there is one of the longest stretches of beautiful white sand in the world, upon which mountainous seas break with a noise like thunder. Presently someone came running up, and said:

"What is this waterfall around here on the other side?"

I said: "There is none."

"Yes, there is a tremendous one!" was the reply.

I went over to the other side of the ship, and there was a waterfall bigger than Niagara! If I had not known every inch of that coast I should have been sure of it. It looked like a river pouring over a cliff seven or eight hundred feet high, into the ocean. Oh the beauty of it! But I knew there was not a cliff on that coast. I knew there was nothing there but one long stretch of low-lying sand. Yet there was the waterfall! There was everything but the roar!

I took the glass and looked at it, and said:

"You are seeing something more wonderful than a waterfall: it is a mirage! Presently you will see it fall away in sections, and it will be gone."

After watching it for some moments some one exclaimed, "Oh!" and a big slice of the waterfall fell off. Then the whole waterfall seemed to rise like a curtain. Underneath it we could see people bathing on the beach, and the next instant the mirage was gone, and there lay the beautiful beach and the low-lying sand hills.

It had been very hot for days. The sand hills became a mass of shimmering heat, and the masses of foam in the breaking ocean were reflected in the shimmering, moisture-laden atmosphere. The mirage was produced, but there was no reality there.

Rev. Lionel B. Fletcher.

That is one of the greatest and most tremendous dangers in the world. Isaiah was looking at his nation, and their present condition. He saw disaster and defeat about him. He saw the institutions of their national life tumbling about their heads. He said, "You have chased a mirage, and now it is gone, but God will give you reality in its place. You thought it was real, and you staked your life on it, and you found disaster and death."

I am not a pessimist, but I am not a cranky optimist. I have lived long enough, and traveled enough, and studied human nature enough, to know something that you people in America do not all realize, namely, that we today, in this old world of ours, are facing the most terrible crisis in history. Your land enjoys prosperity, but the world is not all prosperous. The world has gone mad in its chase after wealth. We are all more or less deceived by the mirage of wealth: there is something in humanity that cannot help it. Every man thinks of the great things he would do if he had the money, but many who have thought this have been ruined, or have seen their families ruined, by the very thing they sought so eagerly. It allures, it deceives, it destroys, and still succeeding generations are deceived by it as if it had never led any one astray before. The great allurements of the world are wealth and pleasure. We think if we only get this or that or the other thing it would satisfy us, but it never

does. In all history you have never read of a nation that was swept away through adversity. All the great civilizations and empires have been destroyed because in their prosperity they lost their souls, and were taken up with pleasure and carnality and then they collapsed because they had decayed from within.

Today what we need,—and I come in the name of God to issue the challenge,—is that those who love the Lord throughout the world shall get back to their knees and back to the old Book. Let us kneel with it, pray our way through it, ask God for grace to live by it! Let us catch a vision of Christ's sacrifice and love, of his saving power and sovereignty, and determine that our religion shall not be just for ourselves, but for others; that we will not seek to be served, but to serve.

And then Isaiah talks about the jackals. The men who went to Palestine and Mesopotamia in the war know that jackals are the most repulsive beasts on earth. Sometimes in the East, when the sun has gone down, you will hear a sound that makes the stoutest heart quail, that makes you shiver with horror. It is a long-drawn-out, miserable howl, followed by a scream like that of a lost soul. You say, "What is it?" It is a jackal. They love darkness, and fatten on disaster. They go out when night comes, and feast on the bodies which they dig up in graveyards. They kill the wounded on the battlefield, and eat them.

Isaiah is talking about jackals. He is saying that in the nation there are those who fatten on the disaster and weakness of their fellows. We have them with us to-day,—the people who trade in strong drink, the miserable beings who are enriched by the white-slave traffic, those who make their living by gambling, they are modern jackals. You in America have thrown out one of the greatest jackals on earth, alcohol and the traffic in it. God bless you and give you victory in your noble efforts! During the war I saw such heart-break and misery caused by liquor that I lifted my hands to high heaven and promised God that so long as I lived I would smite that cursed jackal with all my might. If you Americans ever go back to the curse of liquor, you will set back the clock of the world's progress, and break innumerable hearts. Christians throughout the world are longing for you to win through, and when you do other lands will be encouraged.

Isaiah told them how the jackals would be banished, and the mirage should be displaced by living reality. He assured them that there would be "grass, with reeds and rushes." The translation may not give you the full meaning. It pictures a courtyard with the beauty of flowers and a lawn of grass; and you can imagine the rippling of the laughter of little children, and you know it is a place prepared for the children of men by the love of God. It is the banishment of the mirage and of the jackal, and the incoming of the kingdom of God. And that is what Christ came for. That is what the cross of Christ stands for. He came to die that we might be forgiven. He came to die to reveal to us the love of the Father. He came to die that his children might be so full of the beauty of his indwelling that their enriched characters and their beautified actions should lift the burden of the world, and wipe away tears from sad eyes, and cleanse evil, and build up goodness, and bring in his kingdom, that all the world should know him.

Do you love Christ enough to do that work for him? How do you love Christ? Is your love something that never issues in sacrifice? Is your love for Jesus Christ great enough for you to give up your son or your daughter for the mission field? Is it enough to make you become all that it is possible for you to become so that men shall see in you the beauty of God? If so, your sternness against sin will be that of God himself, and your tenderness will be as great, and you shall become a mighty people bound together to do the will of God. Here in your land God is bringing together the blood of the world that he may build a great people who shall send out the glorious gospel to the four winds of heaven. When Christ comes will he find you worthy? I pray that he may teach you his love afresh today, and bring you to choose the spiritual values, which are the only things that last. And may he make us all his dear children, in deed as well as in word!

# THE WISDOM FROM ABOVE:*

## A SIDELIGHT ON THE LIFE OF JESUS.

Rev. J. East Harrison.

*The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without variance, without hypocrisy. James 3. 17.*

Details of the early lives of great men possess profound interest for those who cherish their memory, or respect their characters, achievements or teachings. Christians often long for a more intimate knowledge of the home life and youthful experiences of Jesus. Painters have portrayed the carpenter's shop at Nazareth, but as they have failed to discover authentic data, they have invented such details as the piercing of the boy's hand by a nail, or the shadow of the cross on the wall. Apocryphal gospels have given narratives that are grotesque fables. What is deeply longed for is some authoritative statement by one who actually knew him, which shall enlighten our darkness, and bridge over the gap between his childhood and his baptism. True, we have the story of the boy in the Temple and assertions as to his development and continuous increase in favor with God and man, but we yearn for more.

The epistle from which our text is taken is a remarkable document. The author of it was James, not the James who was the son of Zebedee, brother of the beloved disciple,—Herod's executioner's sword had shorn his head off long before this was written. The writer was the chief minister, or bishop, of the church at Jerusalem. Son of Mary and of Joseph, he was the half-brother of our Lord Jesus (Matthew 13. 54, 55; Galatians 1. 19). When we read this epistle we are perusing a letter written by a member of our Lord's own family: one who knew him intimately, played with him as a child, ate at the same table, attended the same school, shared with him the same household pleasures and sorrows, worshiped at the same family altar and home synagogue, and with Jesus helped the mother in the house and Joseph at the bench.

Long years had passed since James had had the marvelous experience of seeing his brother, who had been executed on the cross and buried, appear to him alive (1 Corinthians 15. 7). He reverenced his memory as absolutely sacred, and knew no greater honor than to call himself his bond-servant (James 1. 1). He became known as austere, fearless and righteous: just the man whose testimony would be priceless in value if he had only given it.

A strange word is used by James in our text, not remarkable in itself, but rendered so by the use to which it had been put. The Jewish philosophers saw mysterious forces operating around them. They recognized in the Holy Scripture, in the orderly arrangement of the universe, and in the thoughts of great men, a singular unity. They referred all this to God, and called it "Wisdom." As the centuries passed they applied this word to all the manifestations of divine intelligence, and as they delighted to personify phenomena, they saw in every manifestation of the divine wisdom a forecast and prophecy of that Messiah through whom the glory and knowledge of God should be fully revealed (Proverbs 8).

In the passage before us James is contrasting the wisdom which is born in hell with that which comes from heaven. Both of these were actually finding expression in the conduct of members of the visible church. Dissension and strife were dividing the church, for professing Christians were allowing pride, obstinacy and jealousy to rule their hearts. But James tells them that there is another spirit which should animate them, "the Wisdom from above," and as he uses this word, fraught with Messianic meaning, doubtless there rose before him in memory the vision of the old home at Nazareth. The wisdom had dwelt with him; his eyes had seen him, his hands had handled him, his ears had heard him, and so he says, "The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without variance, without hypocrisy."

* A Bible-Reading given in The Northfield Hotel, September 1923.

We seem to have here a description of Jesus given by his own brother. The curtain is drawn aside, and we see the young carpenter, son of Mary, yet very God, and know what he looked like to one who knew him most intimately, and now allowed his memory to direct his estimate of his marvelous character.

The purpose of James in describing the heavenly wisdom is intensely practical. As truly as men come under the domination of the wisdom from below, and become, as he says, "earthly, sensual, devilish," so men may claim and possess the wisdom from above. The very life of Jesus may be manifested in us. The heavenly wisdom was not intended simply to be displayed in the unique personality of the divine Christ, but we are told, "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 2. 5). As we read the details of the description our Lord's brother gives, we are not to be bewildered or tantalized by viewing the unattainable, but are to look to the Holy Spirit of wisdom to transform us into the same image. Infinitely wonderful as it is, this is the norm of the Christian life. Anything short of this is to be esteemed failure.

James says: "The first thing I recall concerning my brother was his purity. The wisdom that is from above is first pure."

As a lily growing on a dunghill, so his fragrant life unfolded its white petals amidst the reek and filth of a sinful world. What a sacred place that humble home must have been, in which that life of luminous and crystal innocence was passed! The presence of that spotless holiness must have made impossible the impure jest or unholy word. In this was the life of God among men made manifest.

The wisdom from above must necessarily be without admixture. A man may sink to any depth of sin and still remain a man, but if God were to sin he would cease to be God. Omnipotence, omniscience, infinite majesty, all combined could not uphold his rule in the heavens, for we are told, "Righteousness and justice are the foundation of thy throne" (Psalm 89. 14). The life of God is essentially pure. He is the holy One. If then his life is in us, it will be an active force manifesting itself in holiness of action, innocence of speech, because of purity of thought and desire.

When we see how far short we come of this eternal righteousness and flawless purity, we must not sink into the anguish and horror of despair, but looking at Jesus, the perfect embodiment of the heavenly wisdom, must claim that by the Holy Spirit the beauty of Christ's mind and experience shall be wrought in us. This wisdom is from above, but it dwelt in the man Christ Jesus. It found perfect and natural expression in human thought and suffering, in household and business affairs. The very impossibility of our attaining to this should lead us to depend on Christ's presence and power as continuous and omnipotent forces in our lives.

Now James says: "The next thing that I remember concerning my brother was his peaceableness."

Equally marvelous with the unsullied purity and divine holiness displayed in the daily life of Jesus was his peaceableness. We may well pity the virgin mother when the sword pierced her heart as she saw her son hanging on the cross, but all parents must envy her as they think of the years of childhood and young manhood in which his presence in the home brought unspeakable joy and peace. Before his calmness passion died away, brawling became impossible, quarreling ceased. Over that one household in disreputable Nazareth there constantly brooded the spirit of rest. The peace of God which passeth understanding was incarnate in a human personality. Ever seeking not to please himself, but others, he shed the radiance of a gracious peaceableness on the whole family. This did not mean that he did not smite sin and error when he saw them, but even when he did so it was in kindness, and with a deep sympathetic yearning over the sinner.

Do we desire such a spirit to be in us, halting the hasty, cutting speech, stilling the irritability of spirit or upheaval of resentment? We must remember that this temper of mind is from above, and therefore must be wrought in us by the Holy Spirit.

Next James says: "Another thing which I was impressed by in connection with my brother was his gentleness."

Matthew Arnold was fond of dwelling on this characteristic of Jesus, calling it "sweet reasonableness." He says, "This mildness and sweet reasonableness it was, which, stamped with the individual charm it had in Jesus Christ, came into the world as something new, won its heart, and conquered it. Everyone had been asserting his ordinary self, and was miserable." Now there came this new thing, the gentleness of a woman manifested through the strength of a perfect manhood.

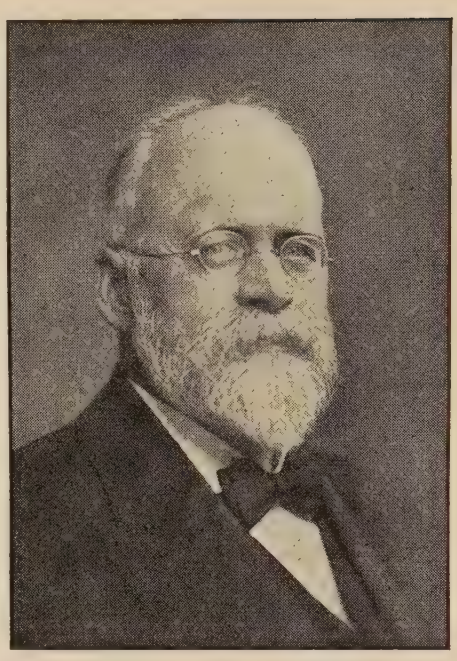
Think of the dishonor done to the name of Jesus by his followers when they fail in gentleness! What irritation they cause when they needlessly wound the feelings of others, what friendships they destroy, what animosities they create, while they profess to be imitators of One whom they call, "Gentle Jesus, meek and mild"!

Paul enjoins this virtue upon us in the injunction, translated in the old version, "Let your moderation be known unto all men!" (Philippians 4. 5). He uses here the word in our text. In the Revised Version it is rendered, "Let your forbearance be known unto all men! The Lord is at hand!" The incentive he urges is the nearness of Jesus. He is at hand, seeing us, interested in our spiritual victories. We then, acting as in his sight, are to show to all men his spirit of forbearance, or gentleness.

Again James says: "Another trait which I noticed in my brother was that he was easy to be entreated."

No other characteristic of Jesus noted by James is more illuminating in respect to our Lord's daily life. We see the mother coming to her boy when he is engaged in some youthful pursuit, and saying, "Jesus, will you go with a message to our neighbor?" Instantly, with a glad smile of happy acquiescence, the play is left, or the task abandoned, and the holy child is speeding on his errand, easy to be entreated. Or we see James himself, while but a lad, bringing some difficulty to his wonderful brother, and Jesus turning without a sigh of reluctance from the business he has in hand and rendering the aid that is requested.

The phrase "easy to be entreated" does not lend itself to exact translation. It is



Rev. J. East Harrison.

specially used to express "cheerful submission to military discipline." Dr. R. W. Dale says, "It describes the temper the opposite of self-will, self-assertion, obstinacy. This virtue has its special exercise in our relations to those who have authority over us." He quotes an old writer, Musconius, who says, "He alone has this virtue who willingly, not reluctantly, submits to a true, fatherly will." This exactly describes the continuous attitude of Jesus. He came to do his Father's will. It was his meat and drink. The joy of his life was found in submission. He lived in the will of God, and died by that will.

It is well that we should cordially recognize that this attitude of heart and mind in relation to God is required of every follower of Jesus. If we imitate the Lord in this respect we please him in all. The ultimate appeal of Christianity is to the will. The unsurrendered Christian is one who has missed the whole genius of his religion. The command to render complete obedience is as imperative and urgent today as it was when Jesus gave to men the call, "Follow me!" and they abandoned all for his service.

It is this which brings us into the closest

relationship with the Lord, for he said, "Whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother." The very essence of sin is self-will. As long as we render to the Lord a partial submission we cannot know the glory and the joy of real fellowship with him. Jesus sunk down continuously into the will of the Father. He stood at all times in the attitude of One who was and did and suffered the whole will of God, and he calls on us to occupy the same position. If we ask ourselves in what particulars Jesus could sanction our refusal to obey the express command of the Father, or even allow a grudging, sulky obedience, we see at once that the measure of our response must be completeness.

The word used by James is translated by Mayor, "submissive, docile, tractable," and we have seen it to be rendered, "submission to a true fatherly will." Jesus said, "Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God!" He was utterly abandoned to the will of the Father simply because his love for the Father was perfect and was grounded on his knowledge of the absolute love of the Father for him. The only way to be "easy to be entreated" by God is to have the same confidence in him as Jesus had. Our response to his command is to be the eager obedience of affection, founded upon our full persuasion of his love for us. When surrender seems hard, the only complete cure for our souls is a firm conviction of the reality of the divine love.

The Holy Spirit is ever ready to work in us both to will and to work for his good pleasure. If we abandon ourselves to the Spirit he will take complete possession of us; he will give us a revelation of the grace and beauty and faithfulness of God, which will captivate our affection, and fill our minds; he will kindle our devotion to the will of the Lord, and give us a love for men which will expel other desires and ambitions, and we shall, without effort or strain, be "easy to be entreated" both by God and by the meanest and most needy human creature.

Once more we hear James speaking. He says: "Another thing noticeable in my brother was that he was full of mercy." This sounds the most Godlike attribute in the list. It describes Christ's attitude towards sinners. No man ever was more sinned against than he, yet his mercy never failed. He was full of forgiveness, compassion and pity, even for the worst. His loving heart went out towards the fallen and debased until men scoffed at him as "the friend of publicans and sinners." Even in the agony of death he not only forgave, but pitied his executioners, and as they crucified him he prayed for them. His miracles were deeds of mercy, his teaching was the evangel of forgiveness. In this he was manifesting the Father, of whom it is said, "Thou art a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abundant in lovingkindness" (Nehemiah 9. 17).

This spirit is to be ours. We who call ourselves by the name of Jesus must have this characteristic of the wisdom from above. As our Lord displayed this attribute of the Godhead in his daily life in the home and in the marketplace of Nazareth as truly as in that supreme act of divine mercy when he secured forgiveness for sinners on the cross, so he looks for us to be full of mercy in all our relationships with others. Forgiveness is to be practised until seventy times seven, until arithmetic is lost sight of, and with uncalculating love we forget past transgressions against us in compassion for the offender. But resentment is so easy, and cordial forgiveness often seems impossible. That is true, but there is a wisdom from above, which was the mind that was in Christ Jesus, and this must be in us. It is not obtained by strenuous effort, but by simple trust in the Holy Spirit, who alone can make the human heart to be "full of mercy."

This is something very different from easy good nature. It is the outflowing of the indwelling Lord. Paul says that he who sheweth mercy is to do it with cheerfulness (Romans 12. 8). But we can only do this through the God who is rich in mercy (Ephesians 2. 4). Only through his Spirit can we be merciful, and so be children of our Father who is in heaven (Matthew 5. 44, 45).

James tells us next that his brother was "full of good fruits."

In the Scripture by "good fruits" are not intended activities of service, but the

natural outcome in word or deed of the inner nature; so James says, "Can a fig tree, my brethren, yield olives, or a vine figs?" (3. 12), and Jesus said, "The tree is known by its fruit" (Matthew 12. 33). In Jesus James saw the perfect character. Naturally and continually the life of his brother, as he recalled it, displayed a personality so crystal clear, so marvelously divine, and yet so perfectly human, that the beauty of the Lord our God was upon him.

Only as the wisdom from above dwells in us can we bring forth the peaceable fruit of righteousness. If we miss this we lose all, and become, as Jude says, "autumn trees, without fruit, plucked up by the roots" (Jude 12). On the contrary, our Lord tells that we are "chosen and appointed that we should go and bear fruit, and that our fruit should remain" (John 15. 16). Our fruit is to be not the outcome of a life like his, but of his life in us. He is the vine, we the branches; separated from him we can do nothing (John 15. 1, 5). The Master says, "Abide in me, and I in you; as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, neither can ye except ye abide in me." The branch has no independent fruitfulness; the sap, the life of the vine, continually flows into it, and the fruit is the product of the vine-life. If we abide in conscious, living union with the Lord, we shall bring forth the fruit of the wisdom from above.

The next characteristic of Jesus noted by James is "without variance."

True consistency marked all the words and works of our Lord. Not from obstinate persistence in his own opinion, but by his continuous, unshakeable loyalty to the truth, and above all to the will of the Father, there was produced in Jesus a stedfast uniformity. He never had to correct his judgment. He never apologized for anything he said, or acknowledged that he had acted wrongly. The compass by which he steered his life was never deflected by passion, self-interest, or fear, or by the varying currents of public opinion. "A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways" (James 1. 8), but Jesus manifested, as no other ever has, singleness of purpose. It is in the very nature of the wisdom from below that it should be politic, should be governed by self-interest, and should sacrifice principle for popularity or gain. He who is controlled by the wisdom from above will, like his Master, be stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.

The last trait of Jesus mentioned by James is, "without hypocrisy."

He who would turn aside for no man would deceive no one. How pitilessly Jesus smote hypocrites! He was himself as transparent as the air. He had nothing to cloak, for he was the truth. His word was, "Yea, yea, and Nay, nay." His brother bears him testimony that he was fearlessly, consistently true. The formal, dead religion of the day was turning its leading exponents into whited sepulchers, hypocritical vipers, but in the quiet of the Nazareth home there unfolded a life of absolute integrity, and a conception of religion which was to recall men to the God of truth. So in his next sentence James says, "And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace." In the stillness of his luminous spirit, at school and synagogue, at the family board and the artizan's bench, this wonderful being was sowing seeds in his own heart and the minds of others which were to bring forth a harvest of righteousness, honesty, integrity and truth. In his mind the enemy was allowed to sow no tares or other noxious weeds, for he was filled with the wisdom from above.

We have seen how James described the excellencies of his brother Jesus, but we must remember that he did not present him as some transcendental being, absolutely above imitation, but had in view the intensely practical purpose of bringing his readers to act and be what Jesus was. The wisdom is heavenly, but it was manifested on earth. There is nothing in this list which may not be inwrought in human nature. No miracle is needed to fulfil this program. No spectacular display of power is involved in it. It is humanity at its best, yet no man until Christ came ever attained to it. It is divine. It is the supernatural displayed through the natural.

Think how new to the world even the desire for such a character and life was, how unlike anything that had ever been seen on earth! The wisdom from below had

had full manifestation, and James tells us it had produced fightings, it was "earthly, sensual, devilish." Now came the wisdom from above. It was seen in a peasant boy. It was so unostentatious that at the time James himself failed to recognize it, for we are told, "Neither did his brethren believe in him" (John 7. 5). Yet when once it was apprehended it was irresistible, and James became ready to suffer martyrdom rather than deny his august relative's spotless holiness.

What is this divine experience which our Lord has shown to be possible under human limitations and conditions? It is the miracle of perfect conformity to the will of the Father.

How can it become mine? As the wisdom from above, it never can be obtained or nourished from any earthly source. It is received through the direct working of the indwelling Holy Spirit, who is in the believer, and who wrought in Christ, as we read, "God anointed him (Jesus of Nazareth) with the Holy Spirit and with power; who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil, for God was with him." Not one particular in this wonderful catalogue is unattainable by us if we will but abandon ourselves without reserve to the Holy Spirit, who will work in us the wisdom from above.

# ASPECTS OF CHRIST'S MINISTRY.*

## Rev. James Reid.

### I. Our Lord's Purpose.

The world is suffering from a great disillusionment. Hopes were awakened by the war which never came to fruition. There is no ultimate gain to the spirit from the war except for those who are ready to put life with all its brokenness into the hands of God. There is no mechanical fruit from the disaster of the war. Nothing can save us except a divine act of redemption.

Again, people are disillusioned of the idea that there is any magic in religion. The gibe that Christianity had failed was really due to the idea which people had that Christianity was a power which would work in other ways than by the response of our whole nature to God in faith and love.

It is good to get rid of these two illusions. That our task is difficult today need not unduly discourage us, for it is just when we are lowest down that God often gets his opportunity. In the ministry we need to learn the strategic value of a situation that is too much for us, because it throws us back on God.

The strain of pessimism today is no disadvantage. There is a pessimism which is sheer atheism, but the great prophetic souls always had a strain of pessimism, because they saw the world as a place in which there are so many destroying forces that without the help of God and his grace there is no hope for us. No man can speak hopefully to his fellows until he has taken the measure of the threatening world, and has overcome the fear of it only because he has seen Jesus and knows that in him there is a power which is more than enough for all these things that can be against us.

It is well to start with three convictions about Jesus.

First, that all we need for an effective ministry is in him, in a right relationship with him.

All we need for our own personal character, for instance, is in him. Personal character is of first importance, for we really help people most of all not by knowing what we know but by being what we are. It is what we are that shines through what we teach, and gives it value. In Christ, also, we find the true method of our ministry. We are just discovering how admirably he used what people call the psychological method. He knew the human heart and mind to its last dim recesses, and its most subtle strategy of guile. We find in Jesus, also, the guidance of God for life in all its relationships. There have been people who have felt that for some departments of life Jesus was not enough,

* Addresses to ministers, condensed. Northfield General Conference, August 1923.

but people today are beginning to realize his adequacy, and are turning to him with wistfulness. Even Mr. H. G. Wells wrote in a popular English magazine:

"Any political or social program that takes no account of the message of Christ is ultimately foolery and the way to death."

The second conviction about Jesus is that as he was in the world, so must we be.

The only resources we can live and work by are the springs he opened up. The only comforts we can have in our discouragements are such as were open to him. The only attitude we dare take to people and life is his attitude. There is a view of the uniqueness of Jesus which cuts the nerve of Christianity because it tends to deliver us from the necessity to be like him. "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus," wrote Paul. "Who took on him the form of a servant," and thereby found his exaltation on that road of the refusal of honor and power and popular esteem and all the other selfish springs from which men drink.

The third conviction is that only through a study of Christ's mind and spirit and method can the spirit work and live in us.

For Paul, the Christian spirit in a man is an original creation. He becomes a Christian by beginning to live and function as a Christian personality, but that spirit only awakes in us through the same kind of contact as friend has with friend, through the intercourse of mind with mind. The relation of understanding and communion that occurs in his historical relation with men is the medium of this mystical friendship.

One key to our Lord's ministry is to comprehend his purpose. Everything in his life falls into line with that. There were no wasted passages, no sidetracks, no uncontrolled moments. Much of the weariness of our work may come from the fact that we have never settled our aim in the ministry.

When they were making the Panama Canal, the men worked for months in sunken trenches, often depressed, until a splendid idea was adopted. In every worker's hut a plan of the whole completed canal was set up, so that men might see at a glance the channel which their little painful efforts in the mud and steam were helping to make. It was a sound device to give them a sense of the purpose of it all. It delivered them from one of the greatest curses of life, the sense of futility.

What was our Lord's purpose? To bring in the rule of God, who is love, over the life of men in every relationship. It was the view of all life brought under the rule of God's love. There are people who dispute this, who tell us that Jesus had nothing to say about many of our great problems, and that the world with its highly complex and elaborated organization has gone beyond him. But the guidance and inspiration for the whole of life and the whole of progress is in the fatherhood of God and the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. The mind of Christ functions continually in his church, leading us into all truth and into all real progress. There is not, for instance, any teaching in the New Testament about slavery, but the Christian idea killed slavery. There is not a word about social conditions, but who that realizes Christ's familiarity with the latter chapters of Isaiah can doubt his passionate interest in the material conditions of a man's life?

What about the social gospel? Is not the true method of changing the world the conversion of individuals? The best answer to this dilemma is to say, first, that the world can be changed only through the conversion of individuals, but not merely the individuals who are at present in the wrong conditions, but also the individuals who are responsible for them; and, in the second place, that a man is not truly converted until he has a real conscience about the conditions in which his brother has to live, and a real sense of his responsibility for a better order.

But with all his far-reaching purpose Jesus achieved a wonderful poise. With his tremendous vision of the kingdom of God in all its range and splendor he combined a vision of the aching need of the most humble soul, and the passion to bring the least and the lowliest into the right relation with God, without which vision of the need of the individual the Christian ideal is merely vapor and sentiment. He never lost sight of humanity. When his great purpose mastered him, . . . . "I

have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened until it be accomplished!" . . . . yet withal he was never impatient of little interruptions. He recognized that there is no occasion too small to lead to a great result, nothing too trivial to become the means of fulfilling the purpose of God.

II. Christ's Knowledge of Men.

If we are to preach, we must know our audience. If we are to get their attention, we must interest them.

The first condition for success in preaching, apart from the fact that the message must be true, is that it must be interesting. It must lay hold of the minds of men from their experience of life. We can take it for granted that God is meeting all men at some point in their experience of life. If we can know them and know their outlook, we can meet their difficulties.

Jesus knew men. "He knew what was in man." He knew that through the insight of his sympathy and the insight of his love. He saw them all as children of the Father. He met people on that level. His whole attitude to people was such that he was able to provoke in each man the response of his true and real self.

How often does our attitude to people provoke not a man's real self, but his poorer self! We are what we really are only to those who love us.

There were several elements in the human nature and mind as Christ saw them. He saw that the human race had gone wrong in certain particulars.

First, the element of fear.

People all around him were afraid. They were afraid of God, and of men, and of the world. They were afraid of all kinds of things. For Jesus fear was a disease, except that fear of sin which separates us from God. No man has a right to be afraid of anything except of what will separate him from God, through whom he overcomes everything. Jesus set himself to meet that element of fear. A large part of our ministry today must be spent in meeting the outlook of people who are afraid of life.

Secondly, he saw in the human heart various barriers between man and man.

There were the barriers of race, of religion, of wealth, of position. All these barriers keep people from realizing the love of God. He set himself to break them down. No man comes to Jesus Christ or accepts Christianity as a general proposition. The way into the kingdom of God for most people swings on the path of some personal conflict or choice. A great many people are being kept out of the kingdom and cannot see the glory of Christ, because of these barriers that are in their minds toward one another. How was it that Jesus was able to say to the centurion that he had not found such great faith, no, not in Israel? In other words, how was the centurion able to comprehend so clearly the glory of Christ? The reason was that, being a man who might be supposed to have various barriers between him and others, he had surmounted all such things. He loved his servant, although he was a military officer. He appreciated the Jew's religion, although he was a Gentile. He loved the Jewish nation, although he was a Roman, one of the race holding the Jews in thralldom and regarding them with some contempt. And so his heart and his catholic sympathy were opened to the glory of Jesus.

Another element was his sense of values.

People have had the wrong standards, —money, success, position, power, these were the great things to people. And because they had the wrong standards they were led into all kinds of wrong ambition. Jesus set himself to change the standards of value.

That must be one emphasis of our ministry today. We must set ourselves to change, for instance, the standard of success. Only through a change of values will the fierceness of the human struggle, man with man, be abated. And only so will men be led to seek God first.

Another element was religious unreality.

Religious people all around him were unreal in their relation to God. The Pharisees were a great people with a great history, but they had succumbed to the temptation that comes to all who have had to fight for a principle, the temptation to stereotype it in some convention of conduct or some formula of words, and to become blind to the reality behind. Jesus had to make them see that conduct is not to be

judged by the act, but by the intention; that goodness and evil consist in the motive; that God is a spirit to be met with everywhere; that true worship is an attitude sustained through all our life, consistent with the character of God the Father.

A part of our business today is to keep away the mists of unreality which are hiding from people the truth and love of God.

There were other permanent elements of the human heart to which Jesus made appeal. One was the longing for a purpose in life, a purpose which would give satisfaction for personality and coherence to the universe. Men are craving that purpose everywhere, below the surface, demanding of us that we shall help to save them from the futility of life.

Again, Jesus found in men everywhere a sense of moral failure, and a failure in life through the inability to stand up to its disasters. Somewhere or other in every man's heart there is the cry of the Breton fisherman, "O God, thine ocean is so great, and my boat so small!" Life, when we see it clearly, is really a conspiracy to bring us to God, and Jesus is on the outlook for people who because of the burden of life are being brought to their knees.

Again, he saw the need of people who were really seeking to serve their fellows with sympathetic hearts, but who, trying to help others, were up against a situation for which their human resources were not enough. Philanthropy sooner or later demands a religious basis. The doctrine of the brotherhood of man is impossible to men apart from the fatherhood of God. Sooner or later mere human kindness, if it is to be sustained, will demand that outlook on people whereby we shall see them, like Paul, as brothers for whom Christ died.

And again, Christ saw in the hearts of people a certain hopefulness, a certain expectation that God would break in. This was the meaning of the Jewish apocalyptic. There was a great expectation in many hearts of the intervention of God. We find it breaking out today in the expectation of the literal second coming, which just means the expectation that God is ready to help us, and that somehow or other he will break in to do it. There is always in the hearts of people this fundamental hopefulness, that Christ means and means good. And we can help them to see that God is waiting to break into our world when we are ready to let him break into our hearts.

As Jesus saw the world, they were faint and scattered abroad. That was his description. Also he saw that they were as sheep not having a shepherd. The cure of all their troubles was to reveal to them the Shepherd, and bring them face to face with the reality of God.

(To be continued.)

# VISIONS AND VISIONARIES.*

## Rev. J. C. Massee, D. D.

Christianity had its origin in visions,—heavenly visions. All revelation from God depends upon the seer and his visions; also the agelong progress of the church has depended upon its visions and its visionaries. Pentecost, with its deep meanings, is, according to the record in Acts 2. 17, the fulfilment of Joel's prophecy, "I will pour forth of my Spirit upon all flesh, and your young men shall see visions."

All of life's permanent structures, whether material or spiritual, are the results of someone's vision. Life is but the interpretation and application of those visions by which souls chart their way over the wide untried seas of experience.

All material structures that have challenged the attention of the world, or have lent themselves practically to the service of mankind, were built first in the mind of someone. Thus, Moses was commanded to build all things according to the pattern shown to him in the mount. Somebody saw the Pyramids before they were built. I have read that there is a tunnel through the Alps which was bored out from opposite sides of the mountain, and that the two groups of workmen digging from op-

* Northfield Christian Endeavor Institute, August 1923.

posite directions came within five inches of the exact place of meeting. Somebody had seen through the mountains before a single spadeful of dirt was taken away or a single pick lifted against a stone. Great bridges span the East and North Rivers between Brooklyn and New York City. Millions of people pass daily over them. Traffic of the great metropolitan districts follows in the wake of the passenger traffic. But before a single wire was swung out to make the suspension cables, or a single tower was erected to support them, somebody had seen in his mind's eye the work completed.

Illustrations of this great truth might be multiplied a hundredfold, but my meaning is clear, so I pass on to indicate the same truth in connection with spiritual buildings.

The nation Israel was completed in every respect in the mind of Moses before its people ever set foot in Canaan. The whole structure of the nation had been wrought out in the intelligence quickened by a clear vision of God, and the plan wanted only its working out.

The Lord Jesus came to build a church, and declared: "I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." It cannot but be that he saw the agelong conflict between sin and holiness, between lawlessness and righteousness, between the god of this world and those principalities and powers under his direction on the one hand, and the saints of Christ and his helpers on the other. He saw the end from the beginning: he saw, and ventured upon his vision.

The whole modern missionary movement originated with the vision of William Carey, who, working at his cobbler's trade for eleven shillings a week, kept before him ever a map of the world, visualizing its dying millions and seeing in their need his opportunity and God's imperative.

### Visions not a Special Privilege.

"I will pour forth of my Spirit upon all flesh, and your young men shall see visions." Surely there is warrant here for believing that whosoever will may see; that into whatever life is willing to pay the price, heavenly visions, divine illuminations will come.

There is perhaps no baser illustration of the soul dulled by the entangling lust of this world and the things thereof than is to be found in the example of Balaam, who was selected by Balak to curse Israel. Half-heartedly waiting upon God, when at last there came to him his real life mission, he speaks of himself as the man "whose eye was closed." But the margin of the American Standard Bible writes it in, "the man whose eye has been opened." He had been blind, but he had come to see. His soul was dull, but now it was sensitive to the divine presence, the divine message.

There is, of course, a price to be paid for heavenly visions. It means the transforming of life and the redirectioning of one's way, the redetermination of the ultimate destiny to which one tends. It was this thought, perhaps, in the mind of Meredith which led him to write:

"He who seeks one thing in life,
And but one,
May hope to achieve it,
Ere life be done."

"Build higher, you sillies!" cried a tender-hearted woman, an invalid, as she looked out of her window on a busy pair of robins building their nest on a low-hanging limb. "Build higher! Do you not know the dangers which lie close to earth?"

Weeks later, when her foreboding had been fulfilled, and the morning light revealed the destruction of the deluded ones, and only the bones and vagrant feathers of the fledglings fallen victim to some stray cat, she cried, as the tears streamed down her face:

"Oh, I told you to build higher!"

It is a word of warning which needs to be sounded to the very depth of the souls of the young men and women of this convention and of this generation. Build higher, aim higher, press upward to higher ground, refuse the lowlands of life, with their miasmas of doubt, sin, selfishness, and sensuality! Look up, live up, lift up! The heights are yours. You live just exactly on that plane to which you consent, for

"One ship drives east,
And another west,
By the selfsame winds that blow.
It's the set of the sails,
And not the gales,
That tell us the way they go.

"As are the ways of ships,
So are the ways of men.
As we journey along through life,
It's the set of the soul
That decides the goal,
And not the journey or strife."

Let us learn some lessons from the heavenly visions that have application in the lives of the Christian visionaries by whom the destinies of the church will ultimately be determined!

### Heavenly Visions are Self-Revealing.

One may easily find a score of illustrations of this fact in the Bible. Three will suffice us.

Job, after his disastrous experience in the loss of property, health, and friends, after his vindication of his own righteousness, after he had even demanded to meet God in argument, begins to climb out of his slough of despair, when he is able to say, "I had heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eyes have seen thee. Wherefore I abhor myself in sackcloth and in ashes!" He had not known himself until he came to see God. Out of the true perception of God the real self-revelation issued.

Jacob's whole experience of life, his final transformation of nature and his ultimate fitness to be the head of the Chosen People, came out of that heavenly vision wherein he dreamed of seeing a ladder whose foot was upon the earth and whose top was in heaven; upon which angels ascended and descended, and from the top of which God looked down upon him. It was out of that heavenly vision that he had borne into his soul the consciousness that heaven was interested in him, and that although he was but one of the millions, he was one, an individual whose life was worth a heavenly interest, and was watched over with divine concern; and that he might build his life in the divine plan for it, and live accordingly.

Isaiah, the young court preacher, suddenly came to the realization not only of his own, but of his nation's utter unworthiness as citizens of the heavenly kingdom and subjects of the divine sovereign, in the vision which is revealed in Isaiah 6: "In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the Temple. . . . . Then said I, Woe is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips, for my eyes have seen the King, Jehovah of hosts!"

The face of God clearly seen is the illumination of God's plan of life in the soul of him whose eyes are opened to see the beauty of the Lord and his holiness.

### Heavenly Visions Are Self-Disciplining.

The whole career of the great saints of the church may be interpreted in the light of their application of their heavenly visions to the practical business of their daily living.

Thus it is written of Moses as he came down from the mount, after seeing God, that his face was shining with that same glow which radiated through all his spiritual being. The veil was put upon his face lest Israel should see the departing glory, but the inner glow could never depart. It was in the light of that inner vision of God that he endured and wrought.

David fulfils in his life activities and that service which he was enabled to render to his generation, a service which enabled God to write this epitaph for his grave, "He served his generation, and fell upon sleep,"—David explains it in one of his writings, "I have set the Lord always before my face, that I may never be moved."

Paul on defence for his life tells of his experience in the Damascus way, and seems to himself to offer a sufficient explanation for his manner of living by telling Agrippa in the court of Festus, "I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision."

That most stimulating and challenging of exhortations written in the New Testament has the same basis, the same experience of the heavenly visions: "Wherefore, seeing that we are compassed about by so great a crowd of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin admired of many, and run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith!" Thus we are told that in life's struggles we shall be judged by the fidelity with which we hold unswervingly to the heavenly ideals with

which any genuine faith in Christ endows us. Step by step as we hold to our heavenly visions in Christ, and move on life's way obedient to them, our faculties are disciplined and brought more and more into subjection to him, till we grow into his likeness, being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord the Spirit.

### Heavenly Visions Are Service-Compelling.

Uzziah was made king in his 16th year. That is the treacherous age for any lad. College men call it the age for "climbing Fool Hill." Take any boy of that age, give him unlimited money, the control of his own time, and the leadership of his gang, and nine times out of ten he will go to the devil. But we read of this lad at the head of his nation, master of his own time, with the resources of an empire at his command, that "he did that which was right in the eyes of Jehovah, . . . . and he set himself to seek God all the days of Zechariah, who gave instruction in the vision of God; and as long as he sought Jehovah, God made him to prosper." He became a home missionary: he corrected the evils of his city, he builded up the waste places. He sent out an army of foreign missionaries, and became for fifty years the mightest force for good operating in the nation.

Properly apprehended, heavenly visions become the source of inspiration to rightly related social service. It was that which Isaiah means, when upon the death of Uzziah that splendid young court preacher came to the point of consecration where he was willing both to depend on and to follow the will, and to do the work of his God. He apprehended the need God had for faithful men and witnesses, and when in this spirit he heard God asking for messengers, he boldly answered, "Here am I: send me!" He understood that reform cannot be wrought by proxy service, by depending upon others to do the known will of God.

When Paul's heavenly vision was completed by that experience in which he was carried up into the third heaven, as related in the 12th chapter of 2 Corinthians, he voices this practical result accruing from it: "I am ready both to spend and be spent." Although he could not utter the words he had heard, nor declare the fulness of the vision which had broken upon his soul in that heavenly exaltation, he rendered a service which commanded the utmost reach of all his powers.

John in Patmos sees an open heaven, and lives for a brief moment in the shining and glorious presence of the Son of God, where he heard a voice saying, "What thou seest, write!"

This then is the word not only for John, but for us. What we see we must write, and we can write into lives of service only what we see with the soul's clear vision. "Ye, then, that be risen with Christ, set your affections on things which are above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God, and not on things which are upon the earth!"

Thus ever life's visions challenge life's service, and the Lord who gives the challenge awaits your answer for service. What answer today, O heart? O child of the Master, what answer?

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Kind words have healed full many a wound,
Have lightened sorrow's weight.
Oh, then, in gentle words abound!
Their revenue is great.

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### Next Month.

**Annual Missionary Number.**

**The Need of Christ in the World Today,** Dr. Robert E. Speer.
**America's Challenge to the Church** (concluded), Dr. John McDowell.
**Calls on the Great Lake,** Dan Crawford.
**Saving America through Her Negro Youth,** Mrs. Caroline Hawkins Brown.
**Missionary Dramatics,** Mrs. Milton Fish.
**Work among Mohammedans,** Rev. Paul Harrison.
**Which is the Great Commandment of the Law?** Rev. E. S. Woods.
**Our Attitude toward the Church,** Dr. A. W. Beaven.
**The Power of God,** Dr. James G. Gilkey.
**Outline Messages from the Word** (concluded), Dr. Floyd W. Tomkins.

**December, Is Love the Greatest Thing in the World?** Dr. James Moffatt.
**January, Prayer and Praise.**
**February, Efficiency and Equipment.**
**March, The Bible.**
**April, The Cross and the Crown.**
**May, Annual Northfield number.**

1923 conference addresses will appear in every issue until next August.

# THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE PHILIPPIANS.*

Rev. John A. Hutton, D. D.

In Acts 16. 6-12 we have the historical account of one of the most stupendous events in human history, namely, the beginning of Western civilization: because this visit of St. Paul to Philippi was the seed from which it came. In Philippi Paul touched Europe, and the gospel was introduced to the Western world. All that has proceeded since had its real origin in that event of which I have read in your hearing in this simple and almost unself-conscious narrative.

I purpose, God helping me, to speak to you, at such hours as may be apportioned to me, from the epistle to the Philippians.

We are always seeing anew the extraordinary appropriateness of the Word of God to the problems and issues and temperament of our time. Every age since Christ came has had occasion to say, "What a wonderful foreknowledge the Word of God had of our particular circumstances in this particular generation!" We who are seeking solace in the midst of the present day agitation and misgivings, and we also who know our Bibles, are constrained to thank God for the extraordinary understanding of what we are likely to be feeling, which we have in his precious Word.

I suppose all good people have their favorite books and chapters, and even their favorite texts. My favorite book in the New Testament is this book on which I am going to speak from time to time at this conference. It is an excellent medicine of the spirit, when your own mind is a little off its center, and when for any one of a thousand reasons you are disaffected and alienated from that high and happy life which you would fain lead from day to day, to read quietly in the Philippian epistle. It is my own experience, which I pass on to you, that I never spend half an hour on this epistle without rising from it a better man, in the sense of being more ready to do God's will as that has been disclosed in the events and conditions of our Lord's life.

The first thing I want to speak about is the great number of things we should never have suspected about St. Paul if we had only the Philippian epistle, the things that Paul does not say about himself, and the things that he might have said evoking our sympathy which he does not mention.

These are the most important things about his epistles,—and certainly the most important things about any man are the things we do not know. This undoubtedly was at the back of our Lord's persistent respect for the mystery of human personality. Our Lord never regarded a human being as a common, ordinary, superficial thing. He always spoke to men and about them as beings far deeper than they had ever given the world reason to suspect. We are all mysteries to one another. What we know of one another, compared with what there is to be known, is as nothing. I am looking on your faces, but from that I have almost no knowledge of you. Each of you is a great mystery to one another and to yourself. Your closest friend is in all profound matters a total stranger to you, and must be so. There is something in each personality such that it can be known only to God. When we read this epistle to the Philippians and use our imagination, as good people should do in reading the Word of God,—I do not mean mere fancy, but a certain kind of glow of the human reason; the human reason penetrated by affection and sympathy and understanding and patience,—when we read this epistle with imagination we become aware of an enormous number of things, and of the value of them, which St. Paul does not refer to at all.

It would hardly occur to you that the man writing this epistle was at the time a prisoner in Rome, with death hanging over his head. He does refer to it, and if you are clever you can see the reference, but it is done so gently and easily and with such a kind of playfulness that unless you are careful you are apt not to notice it. He tells that the things that have befallen him "have turned out rather for the furtherance of the gospel." That is all he says about what has happened to him, when all the time he was a prisoner at Rome, and knew that the worst was likely.

In those days a prisoner like Paul would have had an additional discomfort, in that

* Northfield General Conference, August 1923.

a Roman soldier was attached to him by a chain fixed at one end around St. Paul's ankle and at the other end around the Roman soldier's ankle, so that wherever the latter went Paul had to go too. But Paul says, "The things that have happened unto me have turned out rather for the furtherance of the gospel." That is to say, "I am always sure of at least one man who is bound to listen to what I have to say. I talk to him about Christ. I don't know what he thinks of it, or how he likes it, but he has to like it! He cannot get away! I tell him why I am here, and why other people also up and down the world have been put in prison. I remove his misunderstandings about Christ. I answer all sorts of low things said about us by outsiders. I talk to him about Christ all day, and in the evening others in the camp ask him what that man Paul is always talking about. 'Oh,' he says, 'he is talking about Jesus Christ. It is wonderful! I don't know all about it, but it is wonderful!'" So he tells others, and so the name of Christ is known throughout all the camp.

God knows things about us that the world does not know, and that our dearest friends do not know. He knows not only what we have done, but what we thought of ourselves after we did it: which is the decisive thing about a man. He knows not only our poor behavior and the unsatisfactory service we have rendered him in spite of all our opportunities, but also what we think of ourselves in our best moments. And in his infinite charity he judges us not by what the world knows or those nearest to us know, but by what he knows.

And so we have this great saying about Jesus, that "he knew what was in man." Sometimes when a man came to Jesus there was something about him that made Jesus say, "I think you should join our movement." Sometimes a man came and said, "I would like to join your movement," and our Lord said, "Don't! I would advise you not to! I would advise you to think about it!" Our Lord went on to say, in effect, "Our movement is of such a kind that we cannot afford to have people coming in and going out." So he said to one of these warm-hearted, enthusiastic, temperamental men who speak before they think and act before they have really decided, "You had better sit down and think it all out! Think as a wise king who is purposing to go to war thinks whether he is able with his resources to meet the enemy with his resources." To another kind of man our Lord would say, "You should come with us." Sometimes that man would say, "I am not fit to do that kind of thing," and our Lord would reply, "It is not for you to say what you are fit to do. I know you to a depth that perhaps you do not know yourself."

Again and again our Lord wants us to do something for which we are in our own eyes absolutely inadequate, and the only way we can interpret the providence is to believe that it is his gracious proposal to make us adequate. That is the first thing about this wonderful epistle, that the things we are not told in it about St. Paul are the things which in his case, as in the case of any good man, are of most consequence.

### Friendliness.

The next thing I want you to see, as a general thing in this epistle, is the extraordinary friendliness.

A great proof to me that something wonderful had come into the world at the time of Christ is the change it produced on the human mind. This epistle is so full of generosity and sweetness that you would think the man who wrote it had never had any trouble, when he had had nothing but trouble. A new power had come to the human mind. It came from Christ: a new power which could transmute experience, and turn bitter things into sweet things, so that the world, when it might have been expected to curse as a result of this new infusion, was able to bless.

Among the new things that came was this quality of friendship. There was friendship in the world before Christ came. Cicero wrote a great book on friendship. We have wonderful passages in ancient literature, like the parting of Hector and Andromache, full of great tenderness. Yet the quality of friendship dealt with by Cicero or in the wonderful story of the parting of Hector and Andromache is separated by continents from the quality of feeling that we have in this epistle, which I am calling friendship! Perhaps the su-

preme lesson of the epistle is that we are in this world to be friendly people.

Paul was an older man when he wrote this epistle. Some things you do not write on until you are older. There is a contribution that older people are to make to truth. Young people have their contribution to make, but I am asking younger people to remember that we older people also have a contribution to make: that there are certain things you do not arrive at by ability, that there is nothing which can take the place of experience.

The contribution which age and experience are qualified to make is the contribution of hope. That may seem a contradiction. It is a contradiction that Paul himself first appears to be guilty of. He used a phrase that is a paradox, "Experience worketh hope." It is the last thing that a modern would say. He would say that life will clip your wings. It is perfectly true that in youth there is something sportive that life and experience qualify and restrain. That is not hope: that is animal spirits without moral quality. It is quite indeterminate. It may become good or bad, but so far as the kingdom of God is concerned it is in a sense nothing.

Mere animal spirits and exuberance that are not related to an idea are nothing. I have seen a calf show that same sportiveness as it played about, and I have seen that calf's mother, who had experience, looking at her young innocent child as though she was saying, "Just wait a little! Life will take that out of you." But that which the calf had is not hope,—it is calfishness.

I can give an illustration from history or literature of what I mean. I do not think you could quote from history or literature an illustration of an older man who had played the game who spoke disparagingly of life, but I can spend a whole day quoting pronouncements on life made by youths of genius condemning and cursing life. My fear of handing over the world to the younger generation is that they would too regularly lose heart.

There is a reason for it. We can never suffer as we did when we were young. If you who are younger play the game, life can never hurt you as when you are young. We were never so old as when we were young. I was old at 25, older in feeling, more hurt and bruised by life, than I am today at more than double the years. The difference is not that I suffered more when I was young,—I suffered nothing, comparatively. In the latter half of my life I have suffered almost everything. It is within the grace of God a beautiful providence that God has for us, that we shall get over the worst when we are young and fresh and gay. "Experience worketh hope."

It was an old man who wrote this letter to the Philippians. That is why it is so friendly. When you get a blow while you are young, you think it is a knock-out blow, because it is the first you have had. But after you get ninety-nine blows and no one of them has knocked you out, you are not so appalled at the hundredth blow. We live and learn. "Experience worketh hope." Or, to put it theologically, the God who has been with us in the first and second and third and fourth blow will be with us in the ninety-ninth and the hundredth.

There is no disinterested knowledge of things. You only know what you are interested to know. According to Luther there is no knowledge of God unless you become interested in his coming to you. As I get older I have to try to find what people of my age and time and experience are qualified to do. I can see that one great function of men my age and older is to tell young people not to break down, to tell them in sad hours to hold fast, and they will never suffer again as they are suffering now. But the chief result of this passing of time, in the case of St. Paul, and of the coming of experience, was that it made him so friendly. I have not time to mention all the instances, but read the epistle during all the days of this conference, and you will see things that you never saw before. You will see repeated illustrations of Paul's habit of ripe friendliness.

Now friendship is the gift of God. The finest title of the church, doubtless, would be "The Society of Friends." Christianity created friendship, its own type of friendship, friendship in the Lord. Friendships before had been founded on interest or on kindred, but these, deep and beautiful as they may be, ought never to be and in the

long run were not so profound as those friendships that are based on a common faith and on common sufferings for that faith.

Some years ago some bits of papyrus, official paper on which were noted down certain sayings which are believed to have been sayings of our Lord not found in the Gospels, were found at Oxyrynchus, in Egypt. There are many such, doubtless,—St. Paul quotes a saying from Jesus which is not found in the Gospels, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." One saying rescued at Oxyrynchus from the forgetfulness of history, brought back into knowledge to become a part of our total recollection of our blessed Lord, is this beautiful one:

"And Jesus said, Make a friend!"

Paul begins by saying to the Philippians, "I thank my God upon every remembrance of you." He could have said something different. He could have said, "There are many things I remember about you that give me much pleasure, but of course I must be honest and say that there are certain things about you which I remember that do not give me much pleasure."

As we get older, we begin to have no interest in old quarrels. We get tired even of the quarrels in which we believe we are right. That is why so many people do not understand why we British want to resume friendship with Germany. They say we want business. I will tell you why we want to get back into friendship with Germany: it is the same as the reason why we want friendship with America and other countries. It may be a wonderful grace that God has wrought into the Anglo-Saxon mind through history and hard experience. English people get tired of quarrels. After the fight is over we want to step down and lift up the man we have knocked out.

I remember being shown over the battlefields in Concord and Lexington by an old man who was the head of a school in Boston. He was apologizing for the inscriptions on the monuments there. I said:

"I want to say two things. First, we have forgotten all about those things. And, more important, you are saying what we are saying now. You here in America carried on the kind of controversy which we are carrying on in England to this day. You took your own way of fighting against the old Tory autocracy, and I would have done the same if I had been alive. Lord Chatham said, 'If I were an American as I am an Englishman, I would never lay down my arms!' The real fact of the matter is, all that is past. We speak of America as we speak of the universe, and for the same reason."

All through this epistle you will find this kindness. There is one little temporary outburst. St. Paul let himself go for one moment in this epistle when he used a word very dreadful when applied to human beings, "Beware of dogs, beware of the concision, for we are the circumcision who serve God in the spirit!"

All his life St. Paul was hounded to death and hounded on to the breast of Christ by the suspicions of the older people in the Jewish church. Once he did burst out and say, quite rightly, "After the manner which men call heresy, so I worship the God of my fathers." Heresy was an honorable word when Paul first used it with regard to himself. Those people misunderstood him. They misunderstood his teaching on the question of justification by faith, his whole attitude toward the law. Paul said that for the man born anew by faith in Christ the law is no longer necessary. Then they all held up their hands. "Is this man proposing in the name of Jesus to justify license?" And without pausing to think, they banded themselves together against him, and suborned emissaries to follow him into every mission field, so that in every field when Paul was speaking there were people in the audience who heckled him and put a low interpretation on his great utterances of the grace of God.

You and I know what Paul meant when he said that the law is no longer necessary. Why? Because we have come under a law still more severe than the law of Moses. The only progress, the only justification for change in theological belief, is that the change which you propose is going to make life more severe for you. Progress is towards something finer, it is not towards ease,—it is never that! It is towards fineness, depth, severity.

We have abandoned the law of Moses,

said the apostle, in the sense that we have come under a higher law which enables us to fulfil the lower law.

Your boy goes away to Boston or New York to earn a living. There are many things you would like to say to that boy. You might mention many rules and laws. He might observe all of them, and yet be unfaithful in some matters on which it would break your heart to learn that he had been unfaithful. But if when your boy is going away you can have an opportunity to say to him, "Now look here, John, life is so different from what it was when I was young that I cannot understand what will be all the surroundings of the life into which you are going, but I want to say this, that I hope you will never do anything that you will be ashamed of when we next meet, anything that you would not be willing for me to know all about. I hope, on the contrary, that the things you do and the things you refuse to do will all be of such a kind that when I hear about them, if I ever do, they will make me happy," and if that boy can accept that spiritual pledge, the pledge of loyalty to you and to your holy anticipation regarding him, he does not need all those other rules and laws and prohibitions. He has the restraint, the prohibition, inspired in a region that lies deeper than any formulary, down at the very source of his being.

Chesterton says that he was sitting somewhere and heard two men talking. One was trying to persuade the other to do something. For a long time the second man was silent, but at last he said, "No, no! Never that! Never!" and rushed out of the room. Chesterton begins an exhaustive paper by wondering what it was that that man was asked to do of such kind that it seemed to run against a subtle barrier of the spirit, which barrier just flung it back, and the man shuddered back from the proposal, back into decency and safety and happiness.

Those about Paul who did not understand him thought that when Paul said we can do without the law he meant that we may violate the law. Of course what Paul meant was that one fulfils a new law which takes up the whole of the older law and carries us forward with something to spare. For one moment he called them "dogs"; then he seems to apologize, and says this exquisite thing with which I will close this preliminary talk.

After that little outburst, which I think he apologized for, he says: "In those things in which we are agreed, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing; and if in any matter we be otherwise minded, if in any other matter we do not see eye to eye, even that God will make clear to us."

My dear friends in America, is there any word from the Word of God that seems more appropriate to the controversial aspect of your church life just now than just this simple, friendly, urbane, mellow, gentle word of St. Paul's? "Some preach Christ of envy, and some of love. Some preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, thinking to add affliction to my bonds, but some sincerely. But whether he be preached of contention or of love, Christ is preached; and therein I rejoice, yea, and I will rejoice!"

Now may God bless to us this first meditation upon his precious Word!

(To be continued.)

# THE VOICE FROM THE SKIES.

## Keith L. Brooks.

Many who a few months ago were skeptical as to the use of radio in the field of Christian work, are now beginning to realize that radio as a means of spreading the gospel has no very close rival. It is limited only by the quality and number of receiving sets throughout the country.

Its greatest danger lies in the fact that ministers of Satan may stand before the microphone. For this very reason the church of Christ should seize upon this means of spreading the true gospel. From a reliable source it is reported that there were 10,000,000 receiving sets in use in the United States July 1st of this year. Assuming that more than one person as a

rule is listening over each of these sets, one may at once visualize the vast audience that may be "listening in" to the Word of God or other forms of radio program. We mention these facts to give the reader an idea of the possibilities of the radio in the spreading of the good news.

The radio manager of Station KJS (Bible Institute of Los Angeles) is a busy man. The postman brings him so many letters that he can scarcely get time to read them all. Some very striking examples of the usefulness of the radio may best be presented by quoting some messages received by the manager of KJS.

It was a dark and rainy night, when few would venture out to the services in the Bible Institute Auditorium, where Dr. R. A. Torrey was preaching. The telephone in the radio operating room rang, and a lady's voice asked:

"Is this the radio?"

The operator replied that it was Station KJS.

"Who is the priest talking tonight?" the woman asked.

The operator replied that it was not a priest, but that the message had been given by Dr. R. A. Torrey, a Protestant minister. She immediately replied that she had been listening in over the radio, and that the sermon was the most wonderful thing she had ever listened to. The operator invited her to attend the services in the Auditorium, which she promised to do.

A business man in a distant state wrote: "For several weeks I have been listening to your Sunday evening services, but not until now have I mustered enough courage to tell you about it. The fact is, I am not a church member, but always believed in the Christian religion. The sermons last evening by Dr. Hunter and by Dr. Torrey, for some reason alien to any that I have ever experienced, got under my sinful hide, and it was with considerable difficulty that I restrained myself from holding up my hand for prayers when the invitation was given. I hope you will continue to broadcast your church service. There is no other way of so effectively reaching the multitude. Sometimes I wonder if you really know how far you reach. It is this thought which prompts me to suggest to you that your sweetness is not wasted on the desert air."

Far up in the mountains of the High Sierras a man wrote a letter expressing his appreciation of the sermon broadcasted from KJS. He said:

"Up here, with the snow six to ten feet deep, with few church buildings and no preachers for nine months in the year, it certainly is a treat to us to be able to tune in on your station and hear such wonderful sermons and church services as you are broadcasting. We know that God is pleased at this modern method of sending his Word throughout the world."

Dr. Torrey, who in days past has stood before vast crowds of people in his world evangelistic tours, is certain that he is speaking to greater audiences than ever before in his life. He takes particular care in the use of this new avenue of reaching hungry hearts, and as he sends his word over the mountains to the very rim of the United States, over into Canada and Mexico, and far out over the sea, he endeavors to speak distinctly, and never fails to have a special word for the friends of Radioland. Realizing that thousands of people have become fascinated with radio, and that a great proportion of these are young people not attracted to the churches, the true radio preacher cannot but feel a tremendous weight of responsibility resting upon him. All who speak from Station KJS have it impressed upon them that the eternal destiny of souls hanging in the balance may be settled by the word that comes to them out of the skies, and since only men true to the Book of books are permitted to speak from the Bible Institute platform, it is not a matter of surprise that nearly every day brings news of souls that have been saved, and of gratitude of many for some word that lifted them out of despondency or brought some new ray of divine light into their hearts.

KJS is one of the most powerful stations in the West, operating on 360 meters with a power of 750 watts. Sunday services are on the air at 11.30 to 12.30 A.M.; 6 to 6.45 and 8 to 9 P.M. (Pacific time); and sacred programs are given Tuesday at 7 to 7.30 P. M. and Thursday 8 to 9 P. M.

## PERSONALIA.

**Calvin Coolidge** is the first Congregationalist to attain the presidency of the United States. In Washington he has worshipped at the First Congregational Church since he became vice-president. His pastor, Rev. Jason Noble Pierce, has an article in the "Congregationalist," in which among other nice things he testifies to the simple and genuine Christianity of the President and Mrs. Coolidge.

"As an inspiration to certain people, let me state that not only is President Coolidge regular in his church attendance, but he is always prompt, he participates actively in all parts of the service except the singing, and he listens attentively to the preaching. Moreover, he honors his minister, never fails to introduce him as his pastor, makes him and his wife guests on special occasions, and makes the genuineness of his friendship unmistakable."

A remarkable testimony was borne to the late **Prebendary Webb-Peploe** on the occasion of his funeral last July by the Bishop of London. In a brief address he bore witness to the high character and noble work of the Prebendary, emphasizing his true greatness as a preacher and pastor. Referring to the Prebendary's length of service, the Bishop remarked:

"How long his ministry here was may be measured by this, that I sat under him as a boy, and yet lived to be his bishop for more than fifteen years. For forty-two years or more he carried on perhaps the most wonderful ministry that has ever been carried on in London. In his prime I suppose he was the most eloquent man in London of any profession, and many owe everything to his faithful preaching of the Word."

Dr. Webb-Peploe was one of the leaders in the Keswick movement in England, and was also a speaker at Northfield some twenty years ago.

**Dr. E. Y. Mullins** of Louisville, who was elected president of the Baptist World Alliance at the Stockholm Congress, says a young woman called him into the ministry. He was planning to practice law. This young woman said to him:

"I think you will not practice law: I expect to hear you preach some day."

Like a bolt from the blue this remark made him consider and yield to the call. "Oh that fathers and mothers would today pray for their sons to be called into the ministry!" Back of the remark of the young woman were the prayers of Dr. Mullins' father.

Rumors of the death of the **Sadhu Sundar Singh** spread a while ago all over Britain and Europe. These, which evidently rose from the fact that his father has recently died, are shown to be groundless from a letter received by a friend in London. The Sadhu wrote:

"I have just returned from Tibet. Owing to some difficulties I could not go far and stay longer in Tibet, but I have made some arrangements to carry on the Lord's work over there with some Tibetan Christian friends. Our school work is still going on well, in spite of some hindrances."

"I am an old man now, I am speaking to some of you for the last time," said **Dr. Russell H. Conwell** at a ministerial gathering on the occasion of his last birthday, "and I tell you from my long experience, and from the bottom of my heart, that the only safety lies in Jesus Christ. Go to Jesus first with all your problems!"

**It is understood that Dr. G. Campbell Morgan** will finish his work in America at the end of the year, and sail on January 26 for Australia, to remain there for an indefinite period. He has been invited to the pulpit of Collins-street Congregational Church, Melbourne, for as long as he desires, and he has cabled an acceptance of the invitation. He was invited to Collins-street in 1917, but owing to difficulties occasioned by the war was unable to go. Now the pulpit is again vacant, and there is no doubt that in this great church Dr. Morgan will find an almost unrivalled opportunity. It will, of course, enable him to do a wider work in other parts of Australia, a country he has never yet visited.

### Bible Notes for Daily Devotions.

We would draw the attention of our readers to the portions of Scripture which will be expounded by Dr. Gardner of Riverside, Cal., in the coming months.

Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon will run into the middle of December. Isaiah will follow with about three months, Jeremiah two months, Ezekiel two months, Daniel one month, and the minor prophets a chapter a day.

Speaking editorially, we have to read Dr. Gardner's matter in manuscript and type a half a dozen times, and we think his course is about as good as any course offered in any magazine for general reading. There is enough of historical background to give an intelligent grasp of the original setting, and there is fine spiritual interpretation and personal application. Dr. Gardner is not a devotee of any single school of Biblical interpretation, but reads all kinds, and gives a balanced conclusion.

Pray his prayers with him, and you will catch his spirit!

Dear Mr. Moody,

Am inclosing check for $2 for one year's subscription to the RECORD OF CHRISTIAN WORK. I would not know how to get along without the magazine. I read every word of it each month, and I am following the Bible Notes each Sunday for the week, and each chapter of the Bible as it is taken up with the Notes. The Notes make the Bible chapters so much more clear and interesting. Living out in the country as I do, away from all Christian people and church privileges, the Bible, the Notes, and the wonderful articles through the RECORD give me great pleasure, and make Sunday the happiest day of all the week.

In 1915 my dear and only son was taken from me. . . . . A beautiful daughter was left to me, and then, three years later, came the dread influenza, and took her away too. . . . . My husband then chose to live back in the country on a small farm. I am confined here for weeks at a time, alone much of the time, alone with God.

Why do I write this to you? To let you know that you are helping one poor soul to keep the faith, and to live for the future, forgetting present trial as much as possible, and to feel that God is in his heaven, and all is well.

Thanking you for every word of encouragement that is brought to me through your magazine, I am,

Very sincerely yours,
Mrs. J. R. O.

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**China Today through Chinese Eyes.** George H. Doran Co., New York. 144 pages. $1.25. Six articles by prominent Chinese, dealing with religious and literary topics. First published early in 1922.

## Gift Subscription Fund.

Contributions are invited to send this magazine free to missionaries, and in special cases. Many requests reach our office. Any sum, small or large, will be welcome.

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Dear Friends,

I can never tell you the comfort and joy the RECORD OF CHRISTIAN WORK has been to me through discouraging and encouraging times in mission life away from home, making me often to sing instead of carrying a long face.

May you indeed reap a rich reward for your part in providing me with it!

Always gratefully and earnestly yours,
Mrs. C. H. B. (Mexico).

Dear Sir,

We have now received your paper RECORD OF CHRISTIAN WORK for over one year. We want to thank you for sending this good paper to us, as we have greatly enjoyed it, and found it very helpful. It is good for us as missionaries to be able to read a paper like it, for we get to know of conditions in the homelands and on mission fields in other heathen countries. We can also in this out-of-the-way corner of the world read some of the best and most inspiring sermons, which give great inspiration and refreshing which we would not otherwise be able to obtain.

With Christian greetings, I remain,
Yours truly,
S. Bergstrom (China).

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**Dr. and Mrs. Milton S. Rees** have made dates for evangelistic services as follows: September, Rochester, N. Y.; October, Richford, Vt.; November, Rome, N. Y.; December, Oswego, N. Y.; January, Oneida, N. Y.

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**Poem Tracts,** by H. W. Pope. Bible Institute Colportage Association, Chicago. 10 cents a dozen.

Mr. Pope has received a gift of versification the past few years, and among many poems he has made some eight or more are now published as single page slips. The subjects include "Prevailing Prayer," "Honey in the Rock," "Shadows," etc.

# OUR BOOK TABLE.

**Jesus of Our Fathers (The)**, by John W. Good. Macmillan Co., New York. 842 pages. $6.

A book that conservatives will delight in and feed upon. Critical blasting operations are not offered or flaunted before the reader: the building is erected out of the material in the English Bible.

Dr. Good is a professor in Georgia State College for Women. His purpose is frankly declared to be to exhibit again those old truths concerning Lord Jesus as our fathers saw him, believed in him, loved him, and served him. This he does by studying our Lord himself as the record is found in the Gospels: there is no critical manipulation of the text, and no making things up out of his own head as he might think they ought to have happened. "The book is written TOWARD the Bible, not away from it."

His plan of analysis is sevenfold. Part I, "The Son of God Born into the World," finds him preëxistent and brings his life through miraculous birth of the Virgin up to the end of Luke 2. Part II introduces the divine Saviour to the world in his public ministry, and extends well into this ministry, one chapter on "The First Reactions to the Son of God" showing Dr. Good's freshness of treatment of the material. Part III considers the organization of the kingdom of Christ in regard to the XII, the citizens of the kingdom, its social laws, its laws of worship and effective living. Then follow "The Propagation of the Kingdom," "The Facing of Christ toward the Cross," "The Passion Week," "The Exaltation and Sovereignty of Christ."

These parts are presented in further divisions and subdivisions, all with topical headings and printed in so clear a fashion that the book does not savor too much of a textbook. Anyone can read it with pleasure.

The author's individuality is patent upon every page, though there is nothing outré or sensational. For instance, discussing the way of life he notes that salvation in its fullest sense always involves both a receiving and a giving. On the receiving side the saved life has a vertical or overhead connection with God through the mediation of Jesus Christ, while on the giving side there is a horizontal relation to man.

The chapter on "The Sovereign Christ Today" is based mostly upon Old Testament prophecy and Acts and the epistles, culminating in Revelation. An index giving the Scriptures used is 13 pages long, two columns to a page. The General Topical Index is 74 pages long, two columns to a page; and it is not overdone, either. Footnotes, Biblical and historical, are sparingly used.

It can hardly be expected that the author's views and interpretations will command universal acceptation. His explanation of the unpardonable sin is rather inadequate. Christ's coming is apparently spiritual and gradual, though there is to be a consummation amid heavenly demonstrations: this because the kingdom is spiritual. He asserts that Christ is king today, he rules the world by appointment of the Father, the church being the visible, militant form of the kingdom.

But in spite of differences on such details there will be genuine pleasure in this new contribution in the field of Biblical science to the literature of Jesus Christ. The Georgia State College for Women is to be congratulated on having so competent and personally devout a Bible professor.

**Beloved Disciple (The)**, by Alfred E. Garvie. George H. Doran Co., New York. 267 pages. $2 net.

Critical and mental gymnastics: by which we mean that the volume works over numberless theories by the author and other writers on the Gospel of John from the earliest times to date. Naturally these theories eat each other up.

For instance, Dr. Garvie carves the text up among (1) a later editor or redactor, (2) the evangelist in (a) his own reminiscences and (b) reflections, and (3) the witness, also subdivided into (a) reminiscences and (b) reflections. The evangelist is not the apostle John, for after examining various theories of authorship Dr. Garvie decides upon a Jerusalem disciple as the author, that is, so far as anything is tentatively decided.

The Gospel is outlined and briefly expounded in the same impractical fashion. —F.

**Christ Preëminent:** Studies in the Epistle to the Colossians, by W. H. Griffith Thomas. Bible Institute Colportage Association, Chicago. 125 pages. $1 net.

A specimen of Dr. Griffith Thomas' best analytical and expository powers.

The text of the epistle is divided into 20 sections, sometimes containing only a verse or two. Topical titles are given to each

section, and then an exposition of each. So the skeleton is covered with good meat, very little fat.

**Epistle of St. Paul to the Colossians (The),** by Maurice Jones. Macmillan Co., New York. 119 pages.

Scholarly lectures, first given at Oxford.

An introductory chapter discusses authorship, and Colosse and its church; also there is a condensed analysis of the epistle. Chapter 2 gives a full statement of angel worship as the Colossian heresy. Paul's antidote is the all-sufficiency of Christ (c. 3). A closing chapter unfolds topically "The Christian Life" as it is seen in the epistle. An appendix gives critical notes on special words and passages.

The work is both conservative and constructive.

**Layman's Handbook of Daniel (The),** by G. A. Briegleb, Los Angeles, Cal. 84 pages.

An evangelic treatment of the text of Daniel. Each chapter is divided into three parts, with word titles beginning with P. The Scripture of each part is printed in full, followed by about a page of comment and anecdote. The framework thus seems rather mechanical, but a person can learn and remember a lot, perhaps.

**Realism of Jesus (The):** A Paraphrase and Exposition of the Sermon on the Mount, by J. Alexander Findlay. George H. Doran Co., New York. 182 pages. $1.50 net.

Something new appears in the opening pages, a suggestive paraphrase of the Sermon on the Mount. Follow 50 pages of introductory study on the age and country and people to which Jesus came, his relation to the Pharisees, and so on. The Sermon is then discussed topically in 21 chapters.

The author is an English Methodist seminary professor, and he writes with the Scriptural steeping and practical directness to be expected of an Englishman and a Methodist. His object is to show that the way of life our Lord proclaims is liveable, not an impossible counsel of perfection.

**Sandy Scott's Bible Class,** by Charles Moody Stuart. United Free Church of Scotland Publications Dept., Edinburgh, Scotland. 88 pages. 1/—.

Sandy Scott's Bible class used to meet Sunday evenings to discuss some Scriptural subject, a parable like "The Widow Wife" (the importunate widow), or a person like David or Jonah, or a subject like heaven. Sandy had keen insight into Scripture, and humor, and good nature, and a ready wit in meeting the questions and difficulties of the young men who gathered with him.

The text is in broad Scotch, with idioms and turns of illustration and thought new to most of us. There are twelve chapters.

The book has had a large sale in Scotland, and is worth it.

**Seventy Weeks (The) and the Great Tribulation,** by Philip Mauro. Hamilton Bros., Boston. $1.75.

A book that will evoke many criticisms and cause teachers of prophetic Scripture to reconsider their views. The author is at his best and his worst. He follows Anstey's chronology, makes the beginning of Daniel 9 to be the decree of Cyrus, strongly argues that the 70 weeks of heptads are consecutive, and opposes the generally accepted view that the last heptad is detached and awaits fulfilment.

His arguments seem unanswerable, but when he takes up the great tribulation, making it the destruction of Jerusalem under Titus, he falls below his usual level. In fact, he will carrry conviction to few if any readers.—R. C.

**The Speaker's Bible.**

We have already given advance notice of the publication under the editorship of the late Dr. James Hastings of a series of monthly numbers under the general title, "The Speaker's Bible." We have now before us five numbers covering Hebrews, and five dealing with Luke 1 to 8. Each number is of 96 pages, with about 800 words to a page, that is, about the same number of words as in a leaded page in this magazine.

The aim of the work is to preserve all that is worth preserving of the modern interpretation of the Bible. The matter is partly quotation for which credit is given, but mostly it is matter that has been worked over by Dr. Hastings into the form his judgment dictated. It is not a commentary covering all the text, but is rather condensed sermonic material on clauses and subjects in consecutive order. While this is by no means exhaustive, there is an immense amount of suggestion for the student and speaker. The style is homiletic, not critical, for the most part.

Dr. Hastings left MSS. for at least four years' publication, which is being carried forward by his daughter. Luke will be followed by an Old Testament book, probably Deuteronomy.

Each number costs 50 cents, postpaid, and can be ordered of the Speaker's Bible Offices, Aberdeen, Scotland.

**Studies in the Teaching of the Sermon on the Mount,** by Arthur W. Robinson. George H. Doran Co., New York. 106 pages. $1.75 net.

After an introductory chapter on "The Person of the Teacher" Canon Robinson divides the text of the Sermon into six parts with these chapter titles:

The Ideal of the Future (Matthew 5. 1-9);

Present experiences of Those Who Accept the Ideal (5. 10-16);
Relation to the Past (5. 17-48);
Peril from the Blandishments of the World (6. 1-18);
Peril from Material Cares (6. 19-34);
Peril from Spiritual Evil (7).

The comment is sermonic, full of interest, not too meticulous. "Notes" are appended to each chapter, giving book references or valuable quotations from others in support of the argument.

### Biblical Themes.

**Jesus Christ and the Modern Challenge,** by Frederic C. Spurr. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 204 pages. $1.50 net.

Mr. Spurr, whose ministry at Northfield last year was so acceptable, tries to clear up the perplexities of people respecting the person of Jesus Christ by these studies on his divinity (deity).

Mr. Spurr keeps his hand on the pulse of current thought, and makes good diagnoses, and prescribes like a good family physician. The average person will be able to follow him with interest and conviction. Our Lord's virgin birth, resurrection, miracles, and other disputed facts of his life and character receive fair treatment, for and against, the author himself stressing the conservative beliefs.

It is an up-to-date survey of an ever vital topic.

**Moral Life of the Hebrews (The),** by J. M. Powis Smith. University of Chicago Press, Chicago. 337 pages. $2.25.

This volume is fitted to be a text book. It is a fine piece of clear, accurate printing, with excellent type.

It is an attempt to present a history of the development of Hebrew morals. The Old Testament is the source of the material, except where certain of the Assouan papyri are referred to to illustrate the morals of the Egyptian Jews.

This literary material, which constitutes the sources for the history, is treated in its probable chronological order; that is, the order that seems probable to those who apply certain critical principles and accept certain critical results as conclusive. This, of course, is the only rational way to construct the history the author attempts; but, speaking with the utmost diffidence because of our lack of technical knowledge on such matters, we cannot, as we read the book, get rid of an uneasy feeling that perhaps the "low" morality appearing in certain sections of documents is first taken as an evidence of their early date, and then this early date is mentioned as presenting the low morals. For perhaps there is no field of scholarly investigation more thickly strewn than this with the snare of the "vicious circle."

The author, however, admits and treats periods of lapse and decay, and considering the limitations of his rationalistic standpoint, the book is eminently fair.

To one who remembers the tone of writings on this subject thirty years ago, the following sentence shows great progress in the view taken of the morality of the Hebrew people:

"No moralist need apologize for the ethics of the Old Testament." And again, "The relation between morals and religion is everywhere evident. Morals cannot be thought of apart from religion."

In connection with this book it would be well to read the earlier chapters of "The Bible Doctrine of Society in its Historical Evolution," by Charles Ryder Smith, D. D., which was reviewed in this column some months ago.—W. O. S.

**Miracle Man and the Wonder Book (The),** by Fred J. Medlau. Bible Institute Colportage Association, Chicago. 79 pages. 35 and 75 cents.

The Miracle Man is Jesus of Nazareth, the Wonder Book is the Bible. A case is made out for each on conservative lines, and the issue of loyalty—"Which?"—is put up to the reader.

**Peerless Poems of David the King (The)** in a New Metrical Version, by J. C. Biola Book Room, Los Angeles. 276 pages.

For a person to versify the Psalter with acceptance is quite a feat. This lady has done it. The poetry is pretty good, with relatively few breaches of rhyme and meter, and many smooth stanzas. Nearly all the standard forms of verse are used.

We observe that in this metrical version the psalms run to greater length than in the Bible. This is to be expected, but still the author keeps fairly close to the diction and thought of the Authorized Version.

**Personal Immortality,** by A. Gordon James. George H. Doran Co., New York. 148 pages. $1.50 net.

Mr. James is sane, careful, scientific in his treatment and method. The main arguments for and against the immortality of the soul are discussed with keenness and originality. The results of physical research are noted. In stating the Christian position all that is materialistic in the popular statement is passed by. Heaven, hell, purgatory, prayers for the dead, each has a chapter given to it.

The argument that appeals to Mr. James as being final is "the revelation by Jesus of the fatherhood of God. The Christian doctrine of immortality begins and ends here. God is our father. It is therefore inconceivable that he should allow the destruction of human personality at death."

He believes that the greatest enemy of

immortality is materialism, and that "the real proof of immortality is to be found in religion. It is obvious, therefore, that what Jesus said and did must be our chief concern."—S. C. H.

**Problems that Perplex,** by J. W. G. Ward. George H. Doran Co., New York. 213 pages. $1.50 net.

Mr. Ward is a successor of Dr. G. Campbell Morgan at the New Court Church, Tollington Park, London, and was heard last year at the Northfield Conferences.

This book has grown out of his dealings with men of all shades of belief and unbelief, he tells us, which led to the conviction that a spirit of earnest inquiry about religious questions is abroad.

It deals with the problem of pain, of prayer, of divine indifference, of the wicked's prosperity, of the atonement, of miracles, of immortality, and other problems of similar vital import. One is impressed with the author's wide reading and deep thinking on these vital questions, and also with his knowledge of the Scripture and his unwavering faith. He is in deepest sympathy with people facing these perplexing problems, and understands the yearning to know, and seeks to bring the teaching of Scripture and of experience to bear on their solution. He shows there is light sufficient in the Word to meet these desires, and points out the way. The book will prove immensely helpful to the minister who preaches on such themes.—J. H. C.

### New Editions of the Bible.

**The Campbell Morgan Analyzed Bible.** Thomas Nelson & Sons, New York. Two editions, $5 and $9 (India paper).

The beautiful edition of the Bible before us is the American Standard Version with Topical Headings and References, and 25 Outline Maps, plus an Introduction by Dr. G. Campbell Morgan, and two outline analyses of each of the 66 books.

The Introduction is a personal explanation, in which Dr. Morgan calls his analyses "first aids to study," to be used as such by the individual student. He also states his personal preference for the American Standard Bible as the most accurate translation for conveying to the English reader the sense of the Scriptures.

One analysis gives a general outline of the contents of a book, the other the messages or interpretation of the book as Dr. Morgan has been led by honest and careful study to catch them. They are each less than a page long, and are printed at the beginning of the book, without intruding into the text. They give a telescopic view of the ground they cover.

Dr. Morgan is mighty in the Scriptures. Here one can get in handy, usable form the condensed results of his studies.

**The Riverside New Testament:** A Translation from the Original Greek into the English of Today, by William G. Ballantine. Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston. 449 pages. $3.

This book is given a false start by author and publishers. They speak of the King James Version as 300 years behind the times, antique, obscure, remote from life, neglected by the present generation, and so on. What nonsense! Where have the writers of such matter been? Don't they know that the said version never had such wide reading, sale and distribution as today?

Dr. Ballantine in his Preface does notice the various other official and individual translations in English, but the publishers' advertising man seems never to have heard of them.

Coming to the translation itself, Dr. Ballantine says he owes much to the 20th Century New Testament, and to Weymouth's and Moffatt's translations, as well as to the King James and the revisions. As a matter of fact, there is nothing startling in the translation, in spite of the publishers' alarm: it is a careful, unstrained, conservative translation of Nestle's Greek text by the former president of Oberlin College. There are no "whimsical and haphazard changes in names," no shifting of the order of the text or books, or other individual license, no injection of personal theories of criticism such as mars Moffatt's translation. A few explanatory footnotes point to disputed passages, or give the meaning of words.

As for the mechanical make-up, the text shows no reference to versification, but chapters are set off by a number heading. The paragraphing is not extreme. In punctuation quotation marks are used, but the lack of commas will confuse a reader, and the exclamation point is not used enough for correct English.

An Index is a good feature.

In closing the Preface Dr. Ballantine has this good testimony to give:

"Although a lifelong student of the New Testament in Greek and English, these days spent in the consideration and expression of its thoughts, sentence by sentence, have brought to him a fresh and holy surprise. Often has he paused in the work to ejaculate with St. Peter, 'Master, it is fine for us to be here.'"

### The Christian Religion.

**Essentials of Religion (The),** by J. Wilson Harper. George H. Doran Co., New York. 224 pages. $2.25 net.

Religion is defined by the author as "the expression by thought, will, feeling, by word and action, of the ideas entertained respecting the relation in which man stands towards the world, his fellow man, and God."

From this definition the reader will believe that the book is a carefully worked

out and learned treatise on religion's various relations to life, moral freedom, organization and sacraments, necessity, and a dozen other matters.

**God's Freemen: A Tract for the Times,** by Nathaniel Micklem. Pilgrim Press, Boston. 222 pages. $2.

We are attracted to this book by the favorable impression we received from the author's previous volume, "The Galilean." Here we find the same genius and humor and originality and learning applied to the subject of religious liberty.

It starts at the Reformation period, and deals with principles rather than with personalities in a frankly controversial but not uncharitable fashion. Catholicism is regarded as an impersonal religion upon a sacramental basis, while Protestantism is essentially a personal religion. We review the principles advocated by Erasmus and the Humanists, Luther, the Puritans, and the so called Spiritual Reformers. Then the nature and function of the church in the light of the Protestant principle is considered. The book concludes with modern applications to such matters as Christian reunion and an adequate theology, and with an interpretation of justification by faith, "the bedrock of the Protestant religion," in modern and untheological terms.

You must read the book to do the author justice throughout. It is well worth it.

**Outlines of a Philosophy of Religion, Based on Psychology and History,** by Auguste Sabatier. George H. Doran Company, New York. 348 pages. $2.50 net.

A new edition of a scholarly work by a noted French theologian, whose standpoint is that of a cautious liberalism, but whose writings are characterized by a deep sense of spiritual reality and a reverent attitude toward Biblical and historical questions.

The style, as so often is the case with French writers, is clear, graceful, and appealing, while the presentation of the subjects considered—Religion (in general), Christianity (in particular), and Dogma (formulation of doctrine),—is original and striking, both comprehensive of facts and condensed in statement.

The author notes, in an age bewildered by positivistic speculations in philosophy, naturalism in science, and radicalism in social theory, a renaissance of idealism and a return to "general ideas," such as faith in the invisible, and a belief in the possibility of a universal religion. He accepted it as his task to lead young thinkers by "a steep and narrow path" past "pious ignorance" and "bare knowledge," "a moral life belied by science," and a conscienceless ethic, "to wide and shining tablelands above." He finds, strictly speaking, no church except in Christianity, and no dogmas save Christian dogmas, which have value not as police restrictions imposed by a usurped authority—as ecclesiastical hierarchies—on human thought, but as they are engendered by Christian life, and expressive of the thought-side of religion.

Three prejudices regarding dogmas are encountered: first, that they are immutable; second, that they perish the moment they are touched by criticism; and third, that they form the essence of religion, which rises or falls with them. On the contrary, Sabatier holds that doctrines "live by an inner life extraordinarily resistant and fecund, and that the criticism of dogmas, so far from injuring the Christian religion, frees it from the chains of the past and permits it to manifest its marvelous gift of rejuvenescence and adaptation to circumstances."

The book is marked by keen analysis, and its principles, held in just proportion and applied cautiously, will no doubt promote a deeper insight into the conditions of faith, and a warmer love, in particular, for the Christian religion.—C. A. S. D.

**Recent Psychology and the Christian Religion,** by Cyril E. Hudson. George H. Doran Co., New York. 124 pages. $1.35 net.

A breezy yet thoughtful discussion of various aspects of modern pyschology (some of it not very modern), as they are thought to affect Christian teachings or experience. The chief topics discussed are the Unconscious, Psychoanalysis and Sin, Psychology and the Spiritual Life, Herd Instinct, Suggestion, Psychology and the Problem of Free Will, and Religious Origins and Spiritual Experience.

With a considerable amount of critical acumen, yet in a fair spirit, Mr. Hudson, an English curate of culture and wide reading, shows up the absurdities of the extreme views commonly held as to the unconscious, the powers of psychoanalysis, the prevalence of sex morbidities, and the mythical or racial-wish origin of religion, while at the same time discovering in modern psychology, even of the sex-obsessed Freudian school, some elements of truth, of practical importance for the better regulation of daily living. Dreams, for example, are held to be quite as often just recollective as symbolic, and even where the dream is symbolic, the figure may disguise some nonsexual repression. Mr. Hudson does well to make the main appeal not to neurotics and extreme theorists and pyschologizers, but to the large mass of ordinary, wholesome, natural people, who are more social than sexual, and less inclined to introversion than to objective ministrations to their fellow men.

This little book, which is very readable, will do good, even if it requires to be supplemented by larger and more scientific works.—C. A. S. D.

**Religious Philosophy,** by Lewis Guy Rohrbaugh, Professor of Philosophy in Dickinson College. George H. Doran Company, New York. 183 pages. $1.60 net.

The author of this insightful volume has written it with the purpose of setting forth the inter-relations of three leading interests of the human mind,—philosophy, science, and religion. In the strict historical order, perhaps, it ought to read religion, philosophy and science.

Dr. Rohrbaugh deals with keen analysis with the spiritual interpretation of life, from the standpoint more particularly of philosophy (and psychology, its running mate), dividing his subject into the three main heads, Dynamics in Science and Philosophy, Energy as a Spiritual Force, and Energy as an Attractive Force. His entire system is built about the modern energy concept, which energy is defined as spiritual and implies a great Mind dominating the world of spiritual activity.

In the third part of the book an effort is made to deal with the question, How do units of energy operate in relation to each other? Certain positive values (of a rather general nature) are located in this sphere, the conclusion being that in the world of action the highest desires and motives of the self are realized in the interplay of relationships between persons and the Supreme Person.

The author succeeds fairly well in avoiding the bog of pantheism, while emphasizing the tremendous urge of universal life. Nature for him is a going thing, but he still finds a place for man, like the South Sea islander, to ride upon the waves. It is a good book, and will do good.—C. A. S. D.

## Biographical.

**Adventures in Evangelism,** by Edmund Thickstun. George H. Doran Co., New York. 231 pages. $1.50 net.

In the form of fiction the author presents a number of good stories of conversion, first of "Elijah Green" himself, then of cases under his ministry or cases known to him to be genuine. Perhaps "Elijah Green" is the author, who is a Methodist minister. "You may depend upon the essential truth of all herein narrated," he says in the Preface.

It is a heart-moving and warming book, calculated to put new fire into a believer's life and service.

**Adventures in Humanity,** by William L. Stidger. George H. Doran Co., New York. 255 pages. $1.50 net.

Dr. Stidger excels his own good record as a writer in this book, perhaps because he has such a good subject. There are 26 chapters giving personal pastoral experiences and other stories of spiritual triumphs. Sometimes a story occupies a whole chapter, and again several incidents support the title of the chapter.

There is not a dull line; rather, the optimism and heartening inherent in the consciousness of the power of the gospel applied in a humanizing way. The narratives reveal visions of opportunity, and breathe inspiration for unstinted effort and sacrifice.

**Jerry McAuley, An Apostle to the Lost,** edited by R. M. Offord. George H. Doran Co., New York. 304 pages, illustrated. $1.50 net.

If there are among our readers any who are not familiar with the conversion and redeemed life of Jerry McAuley, we earnestly exhort them to get a copy of this reprint and learn of the apostle of modern city mission work.

In addition to Jerry's own life and work chapters are given by some of his most notable converts, like Sam Hadley and John Jaeger.

The pictures add personal interest to the narrative.

**Old Memories: Autobiography by Sir Henry Jones.** George H. Doran Co., New York. 227 pages, with frontispiece. $1.35 net.

A year ago we printed a notice of a book, "A Faith that Enquires," by Sir Henry Jones. The author is also known in this country by his lecture tours. To all who have heard him or read his writings this volume will come with interest, but not to them alone, for it is a fascinating story of a poor Welsh lad who won in the struggle for education, and who died professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Glasgow, a man respected throughout the nation as a scholar and publicist.

The frontispiece exhibits a noble and scholarly face and head. The narrative is charming in its revelation of the beautiful home life and personal character of his parents. Later on the figures of many of Scotland's great men and scholars appear on the stage.

## Points for Workers.

**Bible Class and the Community (The),** by John A. Cross. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 160 pages. $1.25.

The title is obscure. The author is president of the First National Bank of Bruin, Pa. Apparently he puts in print some first-class ideas regarding the development of personal and community character through the medium of the Bible school. The usual aspects of the subject are unfolded in an unprofessional way.

**Effective Evangelist (The),** by Lionel B. Fletcher. George H. Doran Co., New York. 266 pages. $1.50 net.

We would call this an unusually good book on an old subject.

It comes to us with a weighty double introduction.

Principal Garvie of Hackney College, London, gives it an almost unqualified indorsement in a Foreword which contains some interesting autobiographical details.

The author's brother, Dr. M. Scott Fletcher, Master of Wesley College, Sydney, Australia, makes some wise remarks about evangelism and the evangelist.

The author's own Preface acknowledges his debt to D. L. Moody, J. W. Chapman, and others, and gives some personalia which indicate his preparation and fitness for his task. The seal of God's approval has been on his ministry in Australia and in England, where the Congregational Union has made him their evangelist at large.

The book deals with the whole subject from the need of evangelism to garnering the results in a direct, practical way. Every word counts.

Mr. Fletcher was a speaker at the Northfield and other conferences and conventions the past summer. He is worth knowing and hearing and reading.—F.

**Handbook for Presbyterian Pioneers:** A Program of Christian Citizenship for Boys of Twelve to Fourteen Years of Age. Westminster Press, Philadelphia. 413 pages, illustrated. $1.

Again we think the title obscure and restrictive. The word "Pioneer" is used in a special sense, as the name of a society of Presbyterian boys. The book is a sort of Boy Scout handbook on a larger scale, useful to any camper or pioneer.

The contents cover body, soul and spirit: health, athletics, aquatics, nature hobbies, how to tell trees, how to have a good garden, pets, thrift, reading, first aid, group and mass games, Americanism,—anything and everything to make a healthy, handy, all-around Christian boy.

Illustrations add much to the text, and an Index renders all the information easily accessible.

### Sermonic.

**Armor of Youth (The),** by W. Russell Bowie, rector Grace (Episcopal) Church, New York. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 175 pages. $1.25.

Having drawn previous volumes of talks to children by Dr. Bowie to the attention of our readers, it is enough to say now that the 45 talks in this book have the same qualities of Scripturalness, simple directness, grip, interest, as ever.

**Basis of Brotherhood (The),** by Milford H. Lyon. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 206 pages. $1.50 net.

The title is derived from the text of the first sermon, "One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren," Matthew 23. 8. There are 15 sermons in all from the arsenal of Dr. Lyon, who is well known as one of the leading evangelists of the day.

Dr. George W. Truett.

**Crowns of Christ (The),** by Robert Stuart MacArthur. Judson Press, Philadelphia. 232 pages, with frontispiece. $1.75.

Twenty textual sermons by the great Baptist preacher, selected by himself just before his sudden death, and representative of his best powers.

**Fifty Short Sermons** by T. DeWitt Talmage, compiled by his daughter, May Talmage. George H. Doran Co., New York. 294 pages. $1.50 net.

There has been only one Dr. Talmage. He has never been excelled, perhaps, as an imaginative orator-preacher. We cannot make out whether this volume contains abbreviated sermons or reprinted articles, but they contain the pith of his preaching.

**God of the Bible (The),** by R. A. Torrey. George H. Doran Co., New York. 246 pages. $1.50 net.

The God of the Bible in distinction from the gods of Christian Science, New Thought, Modernism, and other isms. Meaty doctrinal sermons on some of the greatest themes revealed in the Bible.

**God's Call to America,** and Other Addresses, by George W. Truett. George H. Doran Co., New York. 208 pages. $1.50 net.

Ten public addresses, rather than straight sermons, by the brilliant Southern Baptist preacher. Several are memorial addresses, one is on "Baptists and Religious Liberty," another on the liquor traffic, etc.

**Great Modern Sermons,** edited by Hobart D. McKeehan, pastor St. Paul's

Reformed Church, Dallastown, Pa. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 212 pages. $1.50 net.

Thirteen sermons, selected by the author, one each by Canon Barnes, Drs. Burrell, Cadman, Fosdick, G. A. Gordon, Hillis, Hutton, Jefferson, Kelman, J. Fort Newton, Norwood and Shannon, and Dean Inge. Sounds like all cream! A brief biographical note prefaces each address.

**Honest Debtors,** by O. P. Gifford. Judson Press, Philadelphia. $1.50.

A selection of sermons and addresses by one who is repeatedly called one of the most eloquent preachers in the Baptist denomination.

The title is from his unique treatment of Romans 1. 14.

Among six addresses that on Christian Science is very valuable. Dr. Gifford knew its founder, and attended some of her lectures in Boston. "Christian Science is unorganized speculation. It reminds one of Hamlet's cloud, shaped like a camel, or a weasel, or a whale, as the fancy serves. The 'Key to the Scriptures' does not fit the lock. Mrs. Eddy does not open the Scriptures: she removes them. The 'Key' would mean just as much without the Scriptures as with them."—R. C.

**Image of God (The),** by Edwin C. Sweetser. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 236 pages. $1.50 net.

Twenty-five thoughtful and varied sermons preached in the Universalist Church of the Messiah, Philadelphia. Some of the doctrinal standpoints are distinctive of the author's denomination.

**One Hundred Best Sermons for Special Days and Occasions,** compiled and edited by G. B. F. Hallock. George H. Doran Co., New York. 552 pages. $2.50 net.

A comprehensive volume of sermons by over fifty named authors for the numerous special days in the church calendar, also patriotic days, and special occasions like laying a corner stone, addressing Odd Fellows and other fraternal orders, election day, and so on. A useful feature is that illustrations are appended to the sermons on a given theme. Thus, "New Year" has 29 pages of sermonic matter and 11 pages of illustrations.

Indexes according to the church year, subjects, and texts, make the contents easily accessible.

**Places of Quiet Strength, and Other Sermons,** by John Timothy Stone. George H. Doran Co., New York. 250 pages. $2 net.

The first volume of sermons (twenty-two in number,) issued by Dr. Stone. Each sermon has a text, which is developed and illustrated in his well known forceful, evangelical style.

**Sermons for Juniors,** by Thomas W. Dickert, pastor St. Stephen's Reformed Church, Reading, Pa. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 203 pages. $1.50 net.

Sermons preached in the author's church, and also published in the "Reformed Church Messenger." Fifty-three brief addresses, based on texts and successful in their delivery.

**Song at Sunrise (The),** by William Russell Owen, pastor First Baptist Church, Macon, Ga. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 153 pages. $1.25 net.

Fourteen Scriptural sermons of graphic, evangelical power. The first sermon, which gives title and tone to the book, is on Exodus 14. 24; 15. 1, 2.

**What Is True Religion?** by Robert J. MacAlpin. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 206 pages. $1.50 net.

Fifteen sermons, and the title is taken from the first. Dr. MacAlpin is minister of Buffalo's largest Presbyterian church, and his preaching has attracted wide attention in that city.

His sermons deal with vital questions and problems of the day, the things about which many people are thinking, and on which there is much perplexity, and he is seeking to bring the teaching of the gospel, as he sees it, to bear on such problems. Some of the subjects are "Growing a Soul," "Seeing Jesus," "The Soul's Dimension," "Our Secret Faults," "Why Wars Should Cease," "Recognition Hereafter," "Our Earthly Loves Hereafter." In reading these sermons one feels that Dr. MacAlpin fulfils both the ministry of instruction and the ministry of comfort to the distressed and perplexed.

One may not always agree with his theological implications. For instance, in the sermon on "Recognition Hereafter" he says, "We read that 'before him every knee shall bow.' This means that in the great far-off finality of things our loved ones out of Christ will at last enter his kingdom."—J. H. C.

**Social Imperatives,** by Craig S. Thoms. Judson Press, Philadelphia. 234 pages. $1.25 net.

A most worthy constructive volume, written from a genuine Christian viewpoint, setting forth ideals in different parts of the social scheme, handling facts and arguments and statistics and aspirations that are up to the minute.

The first chapter pictures the awaking social consciousness, the last chapter emphasizes the need of faith in social progress. Between, chapters are given to the need of religion, of socialized homes, of moral training in public schools, of socially-minded universities, of Christianized business, of peace-time patriotism, of better-born children. What a lot of live topics!

The author is professor of Sociology in the University of South Dakota.

**Standard of Living (The),** by Newton Howland Cornish. Macmillan Co., New York. 340 pages. $2.

As a textbook, much thorough work is covered. The budgets are explicit, and show the author's heart interest as well as head knowledge.

For the homemaker there are many valuable suggestions, also information which would help in planning for supplies and purchasing.

Undoubtedly the book will be appreciated not only because so little has been written on the subject, but also because this piece of work has been so comprehensively done. —B. M. W.

**Story of the Hymns and Tunes (The),** edited by Theron Brown and Hezekiah Butterworth. George H. Doran Co., New York. 564 pages. $2.25 net.

A most useful, comforting and inspiring book. It is useful for all teachers in church and school, comforting to all shut-ins and any in bereavement, inspiring to better Christian living on the part of all. The collaborators have rendered a service to literature as well as to religion.—F. L. D.

ALSO RECEIVED.

**Christian Fellowship and Modern Industry,** by Arthur E Holt. Pilgrim Press, Boston. 55 pages.

Twelve lessons on the duties and rights of the farmer, the employer, the employee, the middleman, the investor, and others, under our present way of living, and how these would be different if there was mutual regard for others. The lessons are intended for adult Bible school classes, college groups, etc., and are designed to build a common Christian conscience. The material consists of suggestions, information and other valuable source material, all calculated to make men think and talk.

**The Home and the Family in the Light of Bible Teaching,** by S. S. Lappin and Mrs. W. D. Van Voorhis. Standard Publishing Co., Cincinnati, O. 110 pages. 25 cents.

A fine series of 13 studies, based upon Scripture portions, of the home and the family in their relation to each member thereof and to courtship, marriage, the aged, education, public morals, citizenship, religion. Each Scripture is outlined and expounded. "A Woman's Point of View" is a new and useful idea. Questions and "Diamond Points" continue the helpful survey of the topic in hand.

**Making Christianity Christian,** by Frank Milton Sheldon. Pilgrim Press, Boston. 28 pages. 20 cents.

Phew! This is about the rawest output we have seen from a denominational publishing house. By misstatement, distortion, half-truth, questionable exegesis, and other ways the author throws the bias continuously against central conservative belief and practice. The very title is a typical bit of uppishness.—F.

Westminster Textbooks.

From the Westminster Press, Philadelphia.

**God Caring for His People:** Junior Department, Second Year, Part III, by Ethel Wendell Trout. 60 cents, illustrated.

Lessons on Moses, the conquest of Canaan, and the judges. The folio is carried up to 432, not including the introductory pages.

**Pleasing God by Right Doing:** Primary Department, Second Year, Part III, by M. Florence Brown. 60 cents, illustrated.

Lessons on the children of the world, learning to know and do God's will, the right use of gifts, and God in his world. Paged from 275 to 417.

**Manual for Leaders of Presbyterian Pioneers,** by Harold I. Donelly. 64 pages. 25 cents.

**Order of Service** from the Book of Common Worship prepared by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church. 26 pages. 40 cents.

LATEST BOOKS RECEIVED.

**Certainty of God (The),** by Wilfrid J. Moulton. George H. Doran Co., New York. 106 pages. $1.50 net.

**Children's Gateway to Bible-Story-Land,** by Laura Merrihew Adams. American Sunday-School Union, Philadelphia. 182 pages. $1.50 net.

**Better Americans,** by Joyce Constance Manuel. Missionary Education Movement, New York. 114 pages, 60 cents.

Good matter, well arranged, and calculated to achieve its intended purpose.

There are 12 varied programs, which combine worship with information and application and expressional work. The subjects of these programs are America as a land of liberty and of plenty, thrift, getting and using money, respect for law, being true to God, and similar practical topics.

The book is one of a Junior Home Mission Course in the "Better America" series.

**Christianity and Psychology,** by F. R. Barry. George H. Doran Co., New York. 195 pages. $1.50 net.

**Competing Artists (The),** by Sara C. Palmer. Bible Institute Colportage Association, Chicago. 126 pages.

**Constructive Revolution of Jesus (The),** by Samuel Dickey. George H. Doran Co., New York. 165 pages. $1.60 net.

**Famous Hymns, with Stories and Pictures,** by Elizabeth Hubbard Bonsall. American Sunday-School Union, Philadelphia. 116 pages. $2 net.

**Henry Loomis, Friend of the East,** by Clara Denison Loomis. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 150 pages. $1.25 net.

**New Testament Story Land,** by Laura Merrihew Adams. American Sunday-School Union, Philadelphia. 90 pages. $1.00 net.

**Old Testament Stories,** by Laura Merrihew Adams. American Sunday-School Union, Philadelphia. 89 pages. $1.00 net.

**Parish Program of Religious Education (A),** by Walter Albion Squires. Westminster Press, Philadelphia. 234 pages. $1.25.

The lay-out of a church school perfect—not solely according to the author's ideas, but from actual experience, he claims,—perfect in organization, administration, curriculum, teaching, housing and support, program, coöperation with church and home, leadership training, and definite spiritual results.

**Quest for Souls (A),** by George W. Truett. George H. Doran Co., New York. 379 pages. $1.50 net.

**Shelton of Tibet,** by Flora Beak Shelton. George H. Doran Co., New York. 319 pages. $2.00 net.

**Ways of Ah Sin (The),** by Charles R. Shepard. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 253 pages. $1.50 net.

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# THE MISSIONARY MESSAGE OF THE BIBLE.

## International Sunday School Lessons.

INTRODUCTORY. For three months we are to study the Bible from the missionary angle. Probably your scholars have never engaged in such study before, so that the novelty of it should appeal to them. They ought to come to see something of the great versatility of the Bible as you present new interpretations and applications of the old material.

The task before the teacher is not an easy one. Some of the lessons look dry and disjointed. They call, then, for more earnest study than ever, and for that vision which will make plain to your scholars God's great purpose of salvation for sinful man everywhere, as at last incarnated in his only begotten Son, himself a missionary from heaven to this needy world.

One result of the quarter's study ought to be an immense increase in missionary intelligence and interest, which, if founded on God's Word, will influence your scholars all through their lives.

### October 7. Abraham, A Blessing to the Whole World.

Genesis 12. 1-4; 18. 17, 18; 22. 15-18.

The title hits off that aspect of Abraham's life which gives it missionary character.

How, in what respects, was he, or is he still, a blessing to the whole world?

*His race.*

"I will make of thee a great nation."

Was Abraham a blessing to the whole world by reason of his descendants according to the flesh?

According to the Bible, Abraham's descendants ran in two main streams, through Ishmael and Isaac. Today they are represented by the Arabs, Bedouins, Jews, and such.

The descendants of Ishmael have been static, but the descendants of Isaac are everywhere—where they can make a dollar.

Have they been a blessing? Opinions differ, but we are unanimous that the whole world has been blessed in the person of Abraham's Seed,—read Galatians 3. 16; Matthew 1. 1; etc.

*His religion.*

Three of the current great religions trace back to or honor Abraham: Judaism, Mohammedanism, and Christianity. To what extent, or how, has he been a blessing to the whole world through these?

Let us see where Abraham marked a new beginning religiously.

He was born a polytheist and idolater (Joshua 24. 2). Recent excavations in Chaldea reveal the deities of Abraham's day. At the call of God he left all this behind, and became a monotheist, a man of true faith, a friend of the God of the Bible. Read again Romans 4 and Galatians 3. 6-14. Every Christian is the spiritual child of Father Abraham, and the blessing of Abraham is spreading worldwide with the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Be sure of this: NOT ONE WORD OF GOD'S UNCONDITIONAL PROMISES TO ABRAHAM WILL FAIL OF FULFILMENT. This assurance leads up to next week's lesson.

*Missionary applications.*

Is it not remarkable that here in the opening pages of the Bible we have repeated declarations of God's WORLDWIDE purpose? This at a time when every other religion was local or racial.

Unless you pull the Bible to pieces and rearrange the contents to suit your theories, these declarations promptly dismiss views that God was at first a mere tribal god who evoluted later into the God of the New Testament—and of today.

The source of Abraham's blessing was GOD: "I will . . . ."

It was upon Abraham's own choice and obedience that God could use him.

His obedience was based upon his faith in God.

### October 14. Israel, A Missionary Nation.

Exodus 19. 1-6; Isaiah 43. 9-11; 45. 20-22.

In the missionary character of Israel we get the true conception of its function in God's purposes. The lesson selections are only a few of many that make this plain. The writings of the psalmists and prophets are full of the missionary objective of Israel.

Note once again the worldwide reach of the verses of the day.

*Function.*

At the beginning of their national life God speaks through Moses and designates Israel as:

(a) God's own possession among the peoples, singled out not for exclusive personal blessing, but as a medium of blessing to all the world;

(b) A kingdom of priests,—God as king, Israel his mediators and servants; and

A holy nation,—set apart, implying character as well as consecration.

All this was something new in human history, and constituted (we may say,) Israel's missionary call.

What a glorious prospect is now before the Bible student if only Israel lives up to the above terms,—a kingdom of priests, a holy nation, etc.,—enjoying God's blessing and sharing it with all nations!

Eight centuries later God speaks through Isaiah. Israel is to be:

(a) God's witness,
(b) God's chosen servant.

To what was Israel to witness? To what service was it chosen? To know and understand their God as the only God (monotheism again), to believe God, to testify that he is the only and the universal Saviour, to call all peoples to look to him and be saved. A comprehensive testimony to the existence, character and purpose of God!

What other nation in history has had its mission and message and ideals thus set before it by the overruling God? What other nation has received a direct missionary mandate?

*Fulfilment.*

Can we say that Israel has fulfilled God's high missionary purposes of witnessing of salvation to all the world?

The Old Testament ends in Israel's lamentable failure in service because of disobedience. But Israel had certain unconditional promises of God which in due time flowered and were fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth. Out of the soil of Judaism grew Christianity. Its sacred writings are part of the Christian Bible. The first disciples and apostles of Christ were Jews, and they spread the gospel of salvation to the ends of the earth of their day (Colossians 1. 23).

The unconditional Abrahamic covenant will not fail. God is not yet through with the world, or with Israel, or with Messiah. The torch of witnessing and service is now in the hands of the church, Abraham's spiritual seed. No nation is Israel's successor as God's chosen people. But upon the return of Christ the nation of Israel will be born in a day, and will take up its primary function of witnessing to all nations (Isaiah 66. 19; Malachi 1. 11). Israel's future glory and usefulness are well attested in the Bible.

*Missionary applications.*

Heathenism has myriads of gods. The missionary tells of the one true God, and of salvation in him alone.

Isaiah 45. 22 is a great gospel verse when the fact and work of Christ are read into it. Charles H. Spurgeon and many more have looked to God in the face of Jesus Christ under this verse, and been saved.

Every believer in Jesus is a priest and king (1 Peter 2. 5; Revelation 1. 6; 5. 10; 20. 6).

## October 21. Israel in the Midst of the Nations.

**Joshua 1. 1-4; Isaiah 2. 2-4; 19. 23-25; Ezekiel 5. 5.**

Does the title mean, Israel in the midst of the nations geographically, or individually?

Use a map of the ancient world, and show your class how Palestine occupied a strategic central position in relation to the continents of Europe, Asia and Africa, especially when you remember that it is bordered on the east by the desert and on the west by the sea. The statements of Joshua, Isaiah and Ezekiel are plainly true from the map.

This central location of Israel on the highways of trade had its varied mutual effect upon national life and customs and religion, yet never so as to submerge the separated character of Israel. The main thing to notice is that Palestine was a land chosen by God for his Chosen People.

However, Israel did not maintain its location as a nation for ever. Recall the exile, when the Northern Kingdom disappeared, and when the best classes of Jews of the Southern Kingdom did not return from Babylonia. Later, numbers of Jews were to be found in Egypt, where the Old Testament was translated into Greek for their benefit in the 3rd century B. C. Since the destruction of Jerusalem under Titus in 70 A. D. the Jews have been a people without a country. Today they are in all lands, in the midst of nations never dreamed of in ancient times.

What has been their influence? Have they been a blessing spiritually? Hardly. They long ago lost any missionary character. The Jews of the Dispersion did unconsciously prepare the known world for the first coming of Christ. Some would say that the ground was also prepared for Paul's missionary labors. But did you ever hear of a Jew giving public witness to the character and purpose of God as set before us in last week's lesson?

*The latter days.*

The prophetic passages from Isaiah and Ezekiel picture conditions when Messiah returns to reign, and open up a large subject.

Just now we hear much about an International High Court of Justice and about a warless world. If Scripture is true, Jerusalem, not The Hague, will be the future seat of justice among nations, and the law will be the word of Jehovah. The world will be a theocracy. Wars shall cease. Jerusalem will be, in a sense, the great missionary center, Isaiah 2. 3, last part.

Zionism is the current realization of the Jewish passion for its homeland. Jews are returning to the Promised Land in unbelief, and as part of God's prophetic program.

Mark, as before, the references to "all nations," "many peoples," etc. God still has his hand on earthly affairs, and his promises of worldwide blessing will have complete fulfilment in Messiah's reign.

## October 28. Some Missionary Teachings of the Prophets.

**Isaiah 60. 1-3; Jonah 4. 10, 11; Micah 4. 1-3; Zephaniah 3. 9.**

The title of today's lesson is misleading. The passage from Jonah may perhaps be

regarded as missionary in our sense of the word, but the passages from Isaiah, Micah and Zephaniah have nothing to do with a missionary program.

To what period do they refer? To the return from exile? To the first coming of Christ? Obviously not, unless indeed very partially. They await fulfilment at the return and reign of Messiah.

What is their subject? Judaism? The gospel of Calvary and the empty tomb? Not at all. The visions tell of the future glory of Jesus of Nazareth and of the Chosen People.

The fact is, Israel has never up to date engaged in a missionary program. When did any of the prophets give the command, "Go, preach, teach"? Who among Old Testament Jews except Jonah ever went to preach to non-Jews? As a rule, psalmist and prophet, speaking for themselves, called down maledictions upon non-Jews.

*Isaiah 60. 1-3.*

This passage is Messianic. See exactly what it says.

The "light" is Messiah. Upon whom does he arise? Upon the heathen? No; upon Israel,—"thee." Has this been fulfilled yet?

Do Israelites go as missionaries to the Gentiles? No; the Gentiles come to Israel. Has this ever been fulfilled?

*Jonah 4. 10, 11.*

Read the book through with the missionary objective in mind. This is regarded as the one definite missionary book in the Old Testament. But Jonah showed mighty poor missionary spirit. What would any of the boards do if a man whom they commissioned to China ran away to South America?

Under his preaching Nineveh repented and turned to God. Thereby they averted impending doom. Jonah was angry with God for withdrawing his penalties. The lesson verses give God's tender correction of the prophet's narrowness of mind and heart by indicating his own heart of love and mercy to all men.

*Micah 4. 1-3.*

This passage is almost the same as Isaiah 2. 2-4 considered last week. Compare them, and see for yourself. To what "days" does it refer? To what place? To whom? Is there any hint of missionary expansion among heathen nations except as the law and the word of Jehovah spread from Jerusalem?

*Zephaniah 3. 9.*

This is one aspect of millennial blessing. It seems to mean that God will turn the impure language (lips) of the peoples into a pure language, for worship and service.

*Missionary applications.*

The missionary spirit, as we use the term, was born with Christ, and draws its genuine impulse from him.

If we may say that the Jews had a missionary message (the truth about God, about Messiah and his kingdom), they showed no trace of missionary spirit and aggressiveness. Beware lest your scholars imbibe only missionary information and fail to catch the missionary spirit!

Nations and individuals are still in gross darkness. Jesus Christ is the light of the world and of every man in it.

The greatest triumphs of Christianity at home and abroad,—revivals, mass movements, etc.,—are as nothing to the changes at the coming of Christ. That coming is the greatest missionary incentive today. Study about it! Live in the power of it!

Come, Lord Jesus!

# SELECTED THOUGHTS FOR THE QUIET HOUR.

(*Learn a Text a Day.*)

## OCTOBER, 1923.

MONDAY, 1st. *Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins. Matthew 1. 21.*

O Jesus, Jesus, dearest Lord,
Forgive me if I say
For very love thy precious name
A thousand times a day!
—F. W. Faber.

TUESDAY, 2nd. *As soon then as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread. John 21. 9.*

Is it not altogether heartening that the risen Lord has mind and heart and will to think of the common needs of a few fishermen, and to spread the table before they reach the shore?—J. H. JOWETT.

WEDNESDAY, 3rd. *Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full. John 16. 24.*

Can it be that ever, in this world, men shall be happy up to the limits of their capacity? Was anybody ever so blessed that he could not be more so? Was your cup ever so full that there was no room for another drop in it? Jesus Christ says that it may be so, and he tells us how it may be so. Bring your desires into harmony with God's, and you will have none unsatisfied amongst them, and so you will be blessed to the full!—ALEXANDER MACLAREN.

THURSDAY, 4th. *Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me! John 11. 41.*

Thankfulness is the only real evidence of faith. The moment we really believe for our blessing we begin to praise, and until we can thank God we have not received what we have asked. Prayer asks, but faith takes the blessing.—A. B. SIMPSON.

FRIDAY, 5th. *Enoch walked with God. Genesis 5. 24.*

O for a closer walk with God! Why should not you and I be as holy as David, as serious as Jeremiah, as zealous as Paul and as loving as John?

SATURDAY, 6th. *Love suffereth long, and is kind. 1 Corinthians 13. 4.*

Be diligent, after thy power, to do deeds of love! Think nothing too little, nothing too low, to do lovingly for the sake of God! Bear with infirmities, ungentle tempers, contradictions! Forego thyself thine own ways for love!—E. B. PUSEY.

SUNDAY, 7th. *And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made. Acts 16. 13.*

I feel as if God had, by giving the sabbath, given fifty-two springs in every year.—SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE.

MONDAY, 8th. *I will meditate on thy works, and talk of thy doings. Psalm 77. 12.*

Oh, how blest it is to take his hand, to look up with all the confidence of the soul exulting in him, to see all the troops of defiant foes melted away, to find in him a calm, triumphant rest! Do you know it? Do you long to know it? It is yours if you seek it where others have found it, in quiet meditation before the Lord.—MARK GUY PEARSE.

TUESDAY, 9th. *In whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit. Ephesians 2. 22.*

Here Paul makes the whole body of believers a habitation of God. It is a wonderful argument for tolerance and agreement. May we all have the wisdom as well as the grace to allow other Christians to differ from us in certain respects of language, manner and work!—B. CARRADINE.

WEDNESDAY, 10th. *And Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, Oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that thine hand might be with me, and that thou wouldest keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me! And God granted him that which he requested. 1 Chronicles 4. 10.*

Jabez' prayer began in the right place, with himself. He did not ask that his circumstances might be changed. If there is anything the matter with our lives it is usually true that most of the matter is with ourselves.—A. B. SIMPSON.

THURSDAY, 11th. *Blessed be the Lord, that hath given rest unto his people Israel, according to all that he promised; there hath not failed one word of all his good promise which he promised by the hand of Moses. 1 Kings 8. 56.*

Promises must be prayed over. God loves to be burdened with, and to be importuned in his own words; to be sued upon his own bond. Prayer is putting the promises into suit. Such prayers will be nigh the Lord day and night (1 Kings 8. 59). He can as little deny them as deny himself.—JOHN TRAPP.

FRIDAY, 12th. *Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding. Proverbs 3. 5.*

Brother, do you lean on your own understanding, your own reason? A safeguard in difficulty, either in argument with others or doubt in yourself, is to ask chapter and verse for everything.—W. P. MACKAY.

SATURDAY, 13th. *I have spoken unto you, rising early and speaking, but ye have not hearkened. And the Lord hath sent unto you all his servants the prophets, rising early and sending them, but ye have not hearkened, nor inclined your ear to hear. Jeremiah 25. 3, 4.*

Repeated calls! There will be a last call, however. Are we to hear that without heeding it?—W. L. WATKINSON.

SUNDAY, 14th. *Now they desire a better country, that is an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he hath prepared for them a city. Hebrews 11. 16.*

Christian, meditate much on heaven: it will help thee to press on, and to forget the toil of the way! This world is but the pathway to a better country, a stepping-stone to a world of bliss.—C. H. SPURGEON.

MONDAY, 15th. *Rejoice mightily, daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, daughter of Jerusalem! Lo, the king cometh to thee vindicated and victorious, meek and riding on an ass and on a colt the she ass' foal. And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the horse from Jerusalem, and the war bow shall be cut off and He shall speak peace to the nations, and His rule shall be from sea to sea and from the river even to the ends of the earth. Zechariah 9. 9, 10.*

Armaments he rejects, and all the paraphernalia of war,—the chariot, the horse and the bow, or, as we would say, the battleship and the fort, the tank and the gun. In their place he puts a meek and lowly and victorious mind, which seeks not for domination but for fellowship, not for destruction but for universal peace.—BISHOP BRENT.

TUESDAY, 16th. *Ye have need of patience, that after ye have done the will of God ye might receive the promise. For yet a little*

*while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. Hebrews 10. 36, 37.*

This is what the Spirit calls "the promise." Christ has promised to return, and return he will. He will not break his promise, nor fail to keep his word. He may stretch our patience to the breaking point, but he has said, "I am coming!" and come he will. —F. E. MARSH.

WEDNESDAY, 17th. *They that wait upon the Lord . . . . shall mount up with wings as eagles. Isaiah 40. 31.*

Trust him in the dark, honor him with unwavering confidence even in the midst of mysterious dispensations, and the recompense of such faith will be like the moulting of the eagles' plumes, which was said to give them a new lease of youth and strength. —J. R. MACDUFF.

THURSDAY, 18th. *At thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore. Psalm 16. 11.*

"Pleasures for evermore!" Let us think of that pleasure which shall never cloy, a blessedness which can never diminish, a rest which shall never be broken, a happiness which shall never be interfered with! At last I shall be satisfied, and none shall ever rob me of my satisfaction!—W. HAY AITKEN.

FRIDAY, 19th. *I know how to abound. Philippians 4. 12.*

The Christian far oftener disgraces his profession in prosperity than in adversity. Oh, what leanness of soul and neglect of spiritual things have been brought on through the very mercies and bounties of God! Abounding grace enabled Paul to bear abounding prosperity.—C. H. SPURGEON.

SATURDAY, 20th. *Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord! Revelation 14. 13.*

What thou knowest about death thou knowest only by revelation. Blessed, dear bereaved one, blessed are the dead that die in the Lord! They have got it all over. The enemy can hurt them no more.—JOSEPH PARKER.

SUNDAY, 21st. *Serve the Lord with gladness! Come before his presence with singing! Psalm 100. 2.*

Come, happy souls, approach your God
With new, melodious songs!
Come render to almighty grace
The tribute of your tongues!
So strange, so boundless was the love
That pitied dying men,
The Father sent his equal Son
To give them life again!

MONDAY, 22nd. *I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost. Romans 9. 1.*

We never do anything so secretly but that it is in the presence of two witnesses, God and our own conscience.—BENJAMIN WHICHCOTE.

TUESDAY, 23rd. *This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success. Joshua 1. 8.*

In meditation we see things in God's light. Many a thing unquestioned before begins to be doubtful, and many a thing lightly excused begins to be condemned, and in that presence there is given grace and resoluteness to put them down, cost what it may.—MARK GUY PEARSE.

WEDNESDAY, 24th. *As the servants of Christ doing the will of God from the heart. Ephesians 6. 6.*

I am using every means by prayer, etc., to be fit to live among angels. O, how pure, how holy must they be in heaven! Lord Jesus, make me do thy will as those spirits do above!—WILLIAM BRAMWELL.

THURSDAY, 25th. *Till we all come in the unity of the faith. Ephesians 4. 13.*

We need to pour our thought, our prayer, our knowledge and spiritual experience into a common stock, so that in the crucible of hard thinking and strong praying in an atmosphere of genuine fellowship we may fashion the instrument that the time demands and the aching heart of mankind needs. Together we must beat by prayer a way into the holiest, that we may gain a renewing vision of the face of God.—RICHARD ROBERTS.

FRIDAY, 26th. *Cornelius, thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God! Acts 10. 31.*

Our little acts of kindness may be unremembered by our friends and neighbors, yet they are never forgotten by God.—W. L. WATKINSON.

SATURDAY, 27th. *He said unto them, Give place, for the maid is not dead, but sleepeth! And they laughed him to scorn. Matthew 9. 24.*

But their scorn and their ribald laughter did not deter him from waking the dead. The one thing we must keep in mind these days is that our business is not to listen to the discouragement of the world, but rather go on doing the will of him who hath sent us. Every great heart who has dragged men from the gates of death has had to endure the contempt of the unthinking multitude.

SUNDAY, 28th. *If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. 1 Corinthians 15. 14.*

In belief in the resurrection is the spring

of that new life of faith of which today the church stands so much in need.—David Cairns.

Monday, 29th. *O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me! Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt! Matthew 26. 39.*

"As thou wilt!" Let this be the deepest and the highest word in thy life! In the power of Christ, with whom thou hast been crucified, and in the power of his Spirit, the definite daily surrender to the ever blessed will of God will become the joy and strength of thy life.—Andrew Murray.

Tuesday, 30th. *And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh! And he said, I will not let thee go except thou bless me! Genesis 32. 26.*

Each of three boys gave a definition of faith which is an illustration of the tenacity of faith. The first boy said, "It is taking hold of Christ"; the second, "keeping hold"; and the third, "not letting go."

Wednesday, 31st. *Thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart. Jeremiah 15. 16.*

What could those words have been that changed a dungeon into a palace, and made the prophet as happy as a prince in purple? They were all about "things to come," when Messiah should rebuild the throne of David, and all godly Jews should have resurrection, and Jeremiah and his fellow prophets should return with joy to Mount Zion. Do not the 14th of John and the 15th of 1 Corinthians produce the same hope in us?—Mrs. George C. Needham.

# ILLUSTRATIVE HINTS AND HELPS

## ON THE CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR TOPICS.

## Mrs. Ida Q. Moulton.

### Lessons from the Psalms: the Word of God Psalm.

Psalm 119. 9-16, 105. October 7.

Whatever I have done in my life has simply been due to the fact that when I was a child my mother daily read with me a part of the Bible, and daily made me learn a part of it by heart; and of all the pieces of the Bible which my mother taught me, that which cost me most to learn, and which was to my childish mind chiefly repulsive,—Psalm 119,—has now become of all most precious to me in its overflowing passion of love for the law of God.—Ruskin.

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"By taking heed" (9).

On the walls of an old temple was found this picture: a king forging from his crown a chain, and near by a slave making of his chain a crown. Underneath was written, "Life is what one makes it, no matter of what it is made."

"According to thy word." For it is only where a man is at one with the Word that he can acquit himself bravely and forge a character safe-guarded against vanity.

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"Let me not wander from thy commandments!" (10).

The daughter of a minister, who was working her way through college, had no choice one summer but to work as a reporter on a city daily where some of the men were rough and profane.

When she was through the managing editor said to her:

"Tell your father that you never once wandered from his teachings, and never once forgot you were his daughter!"

The roughest man in the office said to her: "We haven't sworn half as much since you came on to the paper."

A whole-hearted observance of God's commandments wields a mighty influence, though not a word is spoken.

"That I might not sin" (11). "Sin will keep you from this Book, or this Book will keep you from sin."

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"I will meditate in thy precepts" (15). God himself cannot reveal very much through his Word to a man or woman who will not give time to meditation.

"I use the Scriptures," says one, "not alone as an arsenal to be resorted to only for arms and weapons, but as a matchless temple where I delight to contemplate the beauty, the symmetry and the magnificence of the structure."

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"I will not forget thy word" (16). How hard it is to find a time each day when we can put all of these things clear out of the way, and say to the old Book:

"I will not forget thee! I will not hurry about other things; I will let nothing else come between us. Impress my heart! Sink deep down into my soul! Make me feel the power you have that is in no other book!"

The Bible has got to soak down through a great many thicknesses of newspapers, trade journals, illustrated magazines, fashion journals, comic newspapers, and other things, to get into the mind of the busy man of today. The wonder is that it ever gets through at all.

### What My Denomination is Planning for the Future.

Luke 4. 14-21. October 14.

When Marshall Field of Chicago opened his store, he resolved that he would not imitate other merchants, but would trust his own judgment, be himself, and do things in his own way. He made his store different from others because he was different himself.

Denominational differences, as seen in their varied plans, discussed freely and in friendly spirit between the leaders of the different faiths, often help to keep the fundamental truths emphasized by each from being wholly lost.

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Life-saving crews in some places on the coast erect a mast some distance from the shore, and the men are taught how to rescue persons by the use of the breeches-buoy. If, in one month after the opening of the active season, a crew cannot accomplish the rescue within five minutes, it is considered that it has been remiss in its training.

Training for leadership should be among the foremost plans of every worthy denomination.

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Church life is dependent in large measure upon influence and example in the home circle.

Mr. Moody used to tell a story about a man whose wife urged him to have family prayers in the kitchen when they had company in the house. The man's reply was, "I honor the Lord too much to ask his presence in the kitchen when I have another room where I receive company."

Have you heard of any denomination waging a campaign to put the family altar in its rightful place in the home?

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A little child, with a burnt finger done up in a bandage and healing ointment, ran into the middle of the street, one Fourth of July, and snatched a sizzling firecracker from the fingers of another child.

"Why did you do that, dear?" asked the wondering mother.

"Tause 'at's the way I dot hurted."

Virile plans for the future of any denomination should include evangelism. There is no alternative for those who have been hurt and cured but to sound the note of warning to others. Therefore plan largely for personal soul-winning that shall reach to the ends of the earth.

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Jacob A. Riis said: "I was once a carpenter, and I framed many a piece of timber of which I did not know the use or place. I could not tell where it fitted in. But there was one who could, who knew the plans because he had drawn them. And this much I knew, that if I did my little part faithfully, and my neighbor his, it would all come out right in the end. When the house was built, there they were, all the little beams with the big, and each fitted in its own place, and none of them was wasted."

Give us more confidence, then, in the leaders who draw up our denominational plans!

### What Is Christian Citizenship?

Isaiah 62. 1-7. October 21.

Macaulay claimed that one could not without self-contradiction say of Charles I, "He was a good man, but a bad king." No one who violated in the discharge of public duties the principles of morality and honor could, he urged, be reasonably or justly spoken or thought of as "a good man."

The moral and religious aspects of a man's character cannot be ignored in estimating his citizenship.

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If every pulpit, Protestant and Catholic, should begin tomorrow to thunder forth denunciations against the liquor forces, the divorce mania, sabbath desecration, or any other evil that threatens the land, there is not any evil, or any combination of evils, that could stand the arraignment for three months.

The words of Burke are true today: "There never was for long a corrupt government of a virtuous people." When you find a self-governing so-called Christian community afflicted with unchristian government, do you really think they deserve any better fate?

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"The citizen in office," says one, "is likely to shape his conduct by what he thinks the people out of office will tolerate in him."

A Post Office employee said:

"It's hard for a man to be honest when so many people that mail matter are trying to cheat the government, washing cancellation marks off stamps, secreting written matter in newspapers, using the mails for lotteries, sending books and reports as periodicals. We get an inside view of public honesty, and it's enough to destroy one's faith, both in human nature and in Christianity."

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Our country is the wonder of the world for the number of the religious faiths it produces. Even members of churches are led astray by new fads and isms. Like the Sadducees of old, such people err through not knowing the Scriptures.

President Faunce of Brown University asked the Twentieth Century Club of Boston: "How long are we going to admit to the schools the religions of pagan Greece and Rome, and bar by law the Bible, because it is a part of the religion of America?"

What is your answer to this question?

### How Can We Answer those who Say that Prohibition Cannot Prohibit?

Habakkuk 2. 1-14. October 28.

Prohibition, and every other law for the good of the people, can be enforced by placing men in authority who have the inclination, courage and ability to do what they are paid and sworn to do.

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That powerful princess of Bhopal, India, with the power of life and death in her hands, imposes prohibition on her people. Through her secretary she sent to the M. E. Board of Benevolence this letter:

"I am directed by Her Highness to convey to your board Her Highness' many thanks for their kind appreciation of her policy in prohibiting liquor manufacture and sale in the state. It may interest you to know that the measure has already met with remarkable success. Great as the loss of income is from this source, Her Highness feels amply compensated for it by the visibly improved moral and material condition of her dear subjects."

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"It's a pity to put the saloons out of business," said some one to a New York policeman.

"If you knew how many times," said the policeman, "I have been called to homes around here to nab men who were trying to murder their wives and drive their children into the street, you'd thank God for putting those places out of business!"

The life-blood of anti-prohibition comes from some of our so called foremost citizens. They are breaking the law, and teaching others to break it. They ought to be dealt with.

FACT AND FICTION.

Fiction. Prohibition was hastily enacted.

Fact. For more than a hundred years prohibition was intensively studied and discussed.

Fiction. Prohibition was the act of the minority.

Fact. 34 states acting separately for themselves had adopted prohibition before national prohibition went into effect.

Fiction. Prohibition interferes with personal liberty.

Fact. So do the Ten Commandments, according to the testimony of every liar, thief, libertine and blasphemer.

Fiction. Prohibition makes hypocrites.

Fact. The treason and anarchy preached and practiced by the liquor people will, of course, make patriots and Christians!!

# BIBLE NOTES FOR DAILY DEVOTIONS.

## LEAVES FROM AN INTERPRETER'S NOTEBOOK.

Rev. John Gardner, D. D., Riverside, Cal.

OCTOBER, 1923.

**Monday, 1st. Job 22.**

The theories of life on which the friends of Job had themselves built were not trivial. All life is an experiment. We make our assumptions, and then experiment with them. Sometimes our assumptions are demonstrated to be false, yet we lack the wisdom and courage to discard them, preferring to live among unrealities rather than to go forward and explore other regions.

This was the fault of Job's friends. Their assumptions were not hastily formed: they were venerable with age. They assumed the righteousness, holiness, omniscience of God. They assumed that God invariably blessed and prospered good men, and hurt and destroyed wicked men. They assumed that prosperity and adversity were tests of character. Although their friend was apparently good, he must be really bad, otherwise the world would be topsy-turvy.

Job replied that there were numbers of people who were palpably wicked, yet they lived and died in wealth, peace, and security.

No matter: the theory must not break down! Eliphaz now turns on his friend, and deliberately charges him with specific sins. True, every known fact in Job's career contradicts the accusation, but the theory demands it. Fortunately Eliphaz was too good a man to be able to close his speech without something kind. He does not exaggerate when he speaks of the kindness of God.

Peake says: "Eliphaz argues, Since the Almighty has no interest or pleasure in a man's righteousness, he will be under no temptation to distort the truth about his real character, but will treat him in harmony with his actual conduct: therefore Job's suffering must be due to sin." The argument is interesting. God is a cold, passionless ruler who has no vital concern

in man's conduct, and adjusts retribution to behavior with the inhuman precision of a machine. To such an automaton pity and spite would alike be unknown. Moreover, he is far too great to be affected by the petty concerns of men. The principle taken for granted by Eliphaz is that suffering, such as Job endures, implies that God means by it to mark the sufferer as a sinner! We shall all of us do well to guard our minds and our lips when we judge men or define God.

*Our dear heavenly Father, forgive our hasty judgments! Help us to see thee in the face of Jesus Christ, and to know that thy glory is in thy goodness! Teach us to think kindly of others! For Christ's sake. Amen.*

**Tuesday, 2nd. Job 23.**

There was a time when charges such as Eliphaz uttered would have produced anguish in the mind of Job, but now the good man is absorbed in a greater problem. The glimpses into the veil which have come to him have filled him with intense longing. He believes that the solution of his problem is to be a personal discovery of God. If only he knew where to find God he would state his case. But here is the baffling mystery: how shall a man find God? He feels that God is somewhere near, but where? The darkness does not yield its secret. Is God deliberately elusive? Can it be that he knows the innocence of the victim and could not have any answer as an excuse for persisting in the affliction of his servant? It seems as though God acts without law or reason. He wills to destroy, and he destroys. But how can God be like that? It is unthinkable, it produces dismay in one who longs to believe.

Living in a day when we judge God through the radiant face of the good Christ, it is difficult for us to appreciate the agony of those who know not why good people suffer. Watson says, "What are the principles unknown to Job, through ignorance of which he has to languish in doubt? Partly, the explanation lies in the use of trial and affliction as the means of deepening spiritual life. They give gravity, and therewith the possibility of power, to our existence. The author says that men are born to trouble. He made Job to suffer, more because he had his integrity to maintain than if he had been guilty of transgressions, by acknowledging which he might have pacified his friends. The truth, however, is that Job was suffering for others."

*Our Father and our God, we praise thee for those in and through whose sufferings we have been led forward in faith and goodness! We thank thee for him through whom sin was declared exceeding sinful, and love was revealed mightier than all wickedness. Help us to give ourselves to him! Amen.*

**Wednesday, 3rd. Job 24.**

Job now addresses himself to the spiritual side of our social problems. How can man believe in the divine government of the world in the face of abounding social injustice and misery? Job feels that there ought to be a great assize in which suffering humanity may submit its complaint. There are the injustices practised by unscrupulous overlords who claim that might is right; there are the pariahs of society; there are the ignorant, helpless masses of what we call aborigines, such as the bushmen of Australia, or the Hottentots, or some of the lower castes in India; there are the masses herded together worse than men herd animals.

Are the wrongdoers who use their powers for their own enrichment brought to book? Do they suffer in person or in reputation? Think of all the outrages wrought by murderers, adulterers and thieves, of those who spoil others openly, and, being rich, go without punishment: do not these criminal classes appear to thrive? If this were a well governed world how could such things prevail? What is the fate of wicked men? The popular theory propounded by Job's friends is that God destroys them, but do the facts of life corroborate such a view? Rather they live in luxury and security.

Davidson says, "Job has gained his victory over his friends, but he has received, or rather inflicted on himself, an almost wound in achieving it. He has shown that God's rule of the world is not just in the sense in which his friends insisted that it was just, and in the sense in which his own moral feeling demanded that it should be just. God is not righteous in the sense that he punishes wickedness with outward calamity and rewards the righteous with outward good. So far the three friends are defeated, and with their defeat on the general question their inferences from Job's calamities as to his guilt fall to the ground. To this extent Job has gained a victory, but his victory, if it secures the possibility of his own innocence, leaves to his mind a God whom he believes to be unrighteous. For his view of what could be called righteousness in the Ruler of the world coincides entirely with the views of his friends."

*Our God, we thank thee for all the goodness there is in the world, for parents and for children who become channels of blessing to their own families, for public benefactors, for missionaries, pastors and teachers! May thy blessing be their portion, may their work prosper! Amen.*

**Thursday, 4th. Job 25.**

Parker says: "It is a curious speech with which Bildad winds up the animated

colloquy between Job and his three friends. There is a streak of failure across the face of the speech, notwithstanding its dignity. If this is all that can be said at the close of such an intellectual and spiritual interview, then some of the parties have grievously misunderstood the case. Taken out of its setting, read as a piece of religious rhetoric, it is good and noble; but regarded in its relations to the particular case throbbing before us with such suffering as men never bore, it seems to be impertinent in its dignity, and to aggravate the wound which the man ought to have attempted to heal. These grand religious commonplaces which Bildad utters are right, they are stately, they are necessary to the completion of the great fabric of theological and spiritual truth; but how to bring them down to the immediate pain, how to extract sympathy from them, how to make all heaven so little that it can come into a broken heart, has not entered into the imagination of this comfortless comforter."

There is much truth in what Parker says, and yet Bildad shows a fine spiritual instinct in his brief rejoinder. He is right in his feeling that God should be discussed with bated breath. Life is an enigma. Job's facts cannot be gainsaid. Yet there is no man, however pure and innocent in habit and longing, who is clean in the sight of a holy God. This is not an argument, this is an intuition of the soul. Both Bildad and Job were saying many false things. There is no creed, no theology in religious history that is not more false than true: not false in intention, but false in that it is an attempt of the finite to define the infinite, of the temporal to explain the eternal, of the twilight to explain the noonday. We need to speak of God and his ways with reserve.

*O thou who art all pure, have mercy upon us! We long for purity of heart, but we are held back by habit, by circumstance, by ignorance, by passion. Help our infirmity, we beseech thee, O Lord! In Christ's name. Amen.*

**Friday, 5th. Job 26.**

The Bible student might be puzzled by this chapter. There is no connection between verses 1-4 and 5-14. Something seems to have happened to the text. Modern scholars suggest that Job interrupted Bildad with a sarcastic reference to the unprofitableness of such words to a man who is in mental and spiritual anguish. Bildad then goes on with his discourse.

The narrative dwells on those great and wonderful things in the universe which serve as a veil behind which God hides himself. It is interesting as showing the way in which men used to think of the universe. There was an upper and a lower world. Under the earth was the abode of the dead, who are spoken of as shades. They dwell in Sheol. Sheol is very deep. It is below the sea. It is the place where the dead gather. "It is not a place of pain, though a dark and dreary abode. Those there are the dead, who still subsist, though they do not live." God's power is seen in Sheol, and nothing there escapes his eye. The upper world of earth and heaven is also under his control.

Davidson says, "Where religious wonder and poetic feeling, not scientific thought, dictate the language in which nature and its phenomena are described, uniformity of conception or expression is not to be looked for." We are told of God's power as displayed in the heavens, yet all that they declare is no more than a faint whisper of his greatness. He is infinitely more than the universe discloses.

*Almighty God, we worship thee with reverent awe! Thou art great, and greatly to be praised. Have compassion on us, for we are feeble and frail! Teach us to know thee! Reveal thyself to us as our Father! For Christ's sake. Amen.*

**Saturday, 6th. Job 27.**

Where is the third speech of Zophar? Scholars are puzzled by its absence. They are also puzzled by the fact that the argument of this chapter seems to contradict all that Job has maintained, and to support the position of his friends. Some have thought that verses 7-23 are the speech of Zophar, though others say that they cannot solve the problem. It may be that verses 13-23 are by Zophar. Anyway verses 1-6 reveal the old Job, still conscious of his integrity and refusing to accept men's judgments concerning the reason for his affliction.

Self-respect is a great possession. A man ought so to live that the thought of God's judgment does not affright him. Yet we know that when a deeper experience comes, even a revelation of God himself, the best of men will abhor himself. Job knows that at such a crisis in his life if he were insincere he would be altogether undone.

Verses 8-12 are thus spoken of by Watson, "The topic is access to God by prayer, that sense of security which depends on the divine friendship. There comes one moment at least,—there may be many,—in which earthly possessions are seen to be worthless, and the help of the Almighty is alone of any avail. In order to enjoy hope at such a time a man must habitually live with God in sincere obedience. The godless man previously described, the thief, the adulterer, whose whole life is a cowardly lie, is cut off from the Almighty. He finds no resource in the divine friendship. To call upon God always is no privilege of his; he has lost it by

neglect and revolt. Job speaks of the case of such a man as in contrast to his own."

*Our Father in heaven, merciful and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth, we thank thee that the veil that used to hide thee has been removed! Thou hast shown thy glory in the face of Jesus Christ. We know thy patience and condescension, and therefore we trust thee even in dark and terrible places. Amen.*

**Sunday, 7th. Job 28.**

This chapter has been described as an interlude. It does not seem to belong to the argument. It is a beautiful poem on wisdom. Peake says, "Its theme is that men cannot obtain wisdom, this being the possession of God alone. It is not easy to see the bearing of this on the question discussed." Personally I am inclined to think it is designed to fill a pause in the discussion, and to give relief to the man who feels that thus far the speeches of Job and his friends have led us nowhere.

When men discuss the wisdom of God they are out of their depth. They may by the exercise of their ingenuity and skill discover the secret of riches, but riches are not synonymous with the wisdom of God. They may explore the bird's path through the air, but observation is not wisdom. The secret of God's purpose cannot be discovered by purchase. The wisdom of God finds its home in God himself. He has hid his own secret, and the best a man can do is to dwell in the fear of God. It is not an intellectual but a religious discovery. "God has appointed the fear of the Lord as the principle to guide men's ways, in substitution for the principle by which he directs his own."

Davidson says, "The passage teaches that wisdom cannot be found either in the visible or the invisible world, either by men or by any creature. It is a thing possible to God alone. Man does not attain to it through the fear of the Lord,—the fear of the Lord is the substitute ordained for men instead of it; for as the absolute wisdom belongs to the Creator, so the fear of the Lord is the wisdom that befits the creature."

*O God, we thank thee that when all things pass away thou remainest; when our most precious refuges fail, we can find in thee both refuge and strength. Help us to call unto thee at all times! In hours of darkness and of tempest teach us to address ourselves to thee! Amen.*

**Monday, 8th. Job 29.**

Argument is over. The soul of a good man utters its plaint. Job begins to ruminate over the days that are gone, radiant joyous days. If only he might have those days back again! They were days of intimacy with God. He and God conversed together as friend with friend. Companionship with God was more precious even than companionship with his own sons and daughters. Those were days of prosperity, everything seemed to yield him treasure.

Next to the companionship with God Job esteemed the honor of men. He lived in or near a city, and shared its government. His words carried weight, men deferred to his judgment. He was held in respect as a man who delighted to show kindness to the poor and afflicted. The fatherless and the widows had trusted in him, the impotent had found him ready to help. "Job clothed himself with righteousness, so that as a man he was lost in the justice which clothed him; and justice clothed itself in him,—he, on the other hand, was justice become a person. The blind he enabled to see that which of themselves they could not perceive; the lame he enabled to attain that which of themselves they were unable to reach." Dwelling in honor, in happy human relations, he looked forward to a happy, peaceful, honorable old age. He loved God and loved man: what had he to fear? Like the phœnix in the Egyptian story, which renewed its youth every 500 years, he could look forward to a long and vigorous life.

No wonder Job was in distress. He could not solve the riddle of life. God seemed to have failed him, and his friends looked on him through a cloud. The radiant past had become enveloped in gross darkness, and the end could not be discerned.

*Our Father, when waves and billows go over our souls, teach us to hope in thee! Thou art the unchanging one; thou art our God. If in days of tribulation we utter bitter words, have mercy! Draw near to us in the darkness, we pray! In Christ's name. Amen.*

**Tuesday, 9th. Job 30.**

Adversity is a great revealer of men. You do not know how mean they can be until you have lost your fortune. If your sun is in eclipse they are like wolves who imagine night has come.

Job tells the story of his experience in adversity. He describes certain human pariahs, men who had been driven from the haunts of their fellows, who were regarded as the offscouring of the earth, men whose presence near human dwellings was resented. These wretched men are not so wretched as Job. They dare to treat him as inferior to themselves, and none among the noble will come to rescue him.

Once Job had pitied them. Davidson says, "In chapter 24 Job referred to this miserable race with compassion. They had often, no doubt, excited his pity, and he saw in their lot, and in the injustice and

the cruelties which they suffered at the hands of more prosperous men, a strange mystery of providence. Now he speaks of their conduct to himself with resentment; for it was no requital of any injury he had ever done them. Yet though they might mistake Job's individual feeling to them, he was one of the class that had robbed them, and that continued the robbery and oppression, and they avenged their wrongs on him with a malicious delight in the calamities that had overtaken him."

Add to this bitterness the physical pain that was eating at his vitals. He was suffering from a foul disease that was decomposing his flesh. He was emaciated. His very raiment added to his disfigurement. And leprosy was spoken of as a scourge of God. He asks for a chance to speak, he stands up to expose his pitiable condition, and God merely glances at him and answers nothing. Job is but human, yet he never could look upon misery without being moved with compassionate pity: how is it that God can look on with indifference? His weeping is not that of a coward, but of a man who has cause to say, This is not fair or right.

We need great pity for those who are tortured by their ignorance. Many noble hearts have had to cry, "Why am I tried? Why has God cast me off?"

Parker says: "When Job sets down in his catalogue loss after loss we begin to feel that the loss was real and disastrous. He has lost what today we call religion. He has lost the consciousness he used to have of the divine presence and nearness and love. He has lost the light; in place of the great sun he seems to have a greater cloud. He does not know where the altar is, or if he could find the rude pile no flame would burn upon it, and there would be nothing round about it to certify the divine recognition and benediction."

*Almighty God, we do not understand the inequalities and injustices that are permitted in the earth! Teach us the meaning of things! Give us the Christlike will to do thy will! If our travail will usher in a better day, give us grace to drink the cup thou dost present to us! Amen.*

**Wednesday, 10th. Job 31.**

Duhm speaks of this chapter "as the high-water mark of the Old Testament ethic, higher than the Decalogue or even than the prophets, since they deal with social, not private, morality."

Job analyzes his inner motives. He knows that if a man regards evil in his heart the Lord will not hear him, and so he turns to his heart. And first he declares that secret sensual desires have never been cherished. He has lived a pure life. In the next place, in his relationship with his fellows he has never uttered nor practised falsehood, nor has he allowed himself to covet any of their possessions. He has always respected the rights of others. Furthermore, in all his social engagements he has never abused the confidence of his hosts nor taken advantage of any one who had become a guest in his own home. He has been a faithful and honorable husband.

Turning from these more intimate acts and motives, he refers to his behavior as a man of property and a man of public affairs. He has never abused his power, never shown the selfish indifference to other people which wealth sometimes engenders. It is so easy for the powerful man to treat the menial with contempt, but Job had never forgotten that master and servant were equal in the sight of God, and that the Lord guarded both with equal care. And lastly, he has never abused his position as a man of wealth. Self-aggrandizement and display, the temptation to trust in riches, the temptation to make a god of money, the temptation to hate and despise those who rivaled him or stood in his way, the temptation to aloofness and inhospitality, and all the other snares which are created by high position, had no appeal for Job. His wealth was a trust, and enhanced rather than spoiled his feeling toward others, either equals or inferiors.

No wonder a man who is conscious of innocence such as this is in perplexity at the sorrows which have been heaped upon him! We shall see, however, that he was speaking as a human being who judges himself in contrast with other human beings. When his eyes are opened to see God he will become aware of a different aspect of being.

*O God, grant that we may have consciences void of offence! Teach us to live unselfishly! May our behavior be such that none can make us ashamed, yet we pray that we may be kept from spiritual pride! Teach us to walk humbly with thee! Amen.*

**Thursday, 11th. Job 32.**

The speeches of Elihu have always been a puzzle to Bible students. They add nothing to the debate. They are introduced abruptly. Elihu does not appear with the other friends, and is ignored when God makes his revelation. The language which he employs has many Aramaisms. A few scholars think the words belong to the original edition of the book. Some suggest the speeches give the author's own solution of the problem, but other scholars think the words are a later addition to the original work.

Elihu appears as a young man impatient against Job because of his attitude towards God and against his friends because they had failed in their effort to vindicate God and reduce Job to silence. He has hesitated to intervene, but now he speaks with the bluntness of youth. He claims that he has what the older men have not, a mind illumined and inspired by God. He has been waiting for the elders to utter the one true

and convincing thing which never came. He is now ready to pulverize the speeches of Job, and invites the three friends to see him do it.

It may be that the Oriental would not revolt from such outrageous egoism, but to a Westerner Elihu begins in a manner to make him insufferable. While the egoism of Elihu revolts us, we recognize the truth of much that he says.

With reference to verse 8 Davidson says: "Both 'spirit' and 'breath' refer to God's spirit of life breathed into man when he is brought into existence. There is no allusion to any extraordinary illumination given to Elihu at the moment when he speaks. The spirit of God is a spirit of intelligence as well as of life, and under the influence of the crowding thoughts which rush into his mind at this instant, Elihu feels that this spirit has been given to him in great fulness."

*Our Father, we pray for the power to help those who are sorrowing, doubting and perplexed! When their grief perplexes us, give us thy Spirit to teach us how to speak! Grant that today we may have the tongues of those who have been taught, that so we may speak words in season to weary hearts! Amen.*

**Friday, 12th. Job 33.**

Elihu feels that there are occasions when men should not use indirectness of speech, but should become intimate and personal. He therefore speaks without restraint, claiming that he has but one sincere purpose in all that he is going to say. He honestly believes that what he is saying is true, and such as will commend itself to men's reason everywhere, and he therefore invites Job to an intimate discussion of certain universal facts. No man has any knowledge of God and life which is so unique that it belongs to him alone. We apprehend certain facts or truths, and our knowledge becomes a trust: henceforth we are representatives of God, commissioned to impart wisdom to others. If Job is afraid of talking to God let him not be afraid of a man.

Job has complained that God is hostile, and that without cause. Elihu urges that such hostility is unthinkable. He would cease to be God if he were capable of prejudice and malevolent purpose. To entertain such conceptions of God is unbecoming. "When Elihu gives the general answer to Job's charges against God, that God is greater than man, he means that the moral loftiness of God's nature made it impossible that he should act in the arbitrary, hostile manner charged against him by Job. It was but another form of the same charge of arbitrary hostility to men when Job affirmed that God was deaf to all appeal and refused to speak to man. God speaks to men in many ways, although he may not answer when challenged as Job had challenged him. He speaks to man in ways becoming his greatness, ways that show that goodness is over all his works."

Elihu believes in life as a discipline, and that the divine purpose is kind, educative, enlightening. God has angelic messengers who convey his comforts, but he also comes himself in gracious comforting when he has found a ransom. Davidson says, "It is assumed that when the sufferer is shown what is right he follows it; then God is gracious unto him, and commands that he be delivered from his affliction and saved from death."

*Our Father, give us a tender compassion toward our neighbor! If he suffers, may we suffer with him! If he is perplexed, may we succor him in his doubt! If we have not respected his misgiving, we pray for thy forgiveness. Let thy spirit shine through us! Amen.*

**Saturday, 13th. Job 34.**

Elihu is very sure of himself. Every rational man must agree with him in charging Job with impiety. Job has laid charges of injustice against God. He claims that God has withheld his rights from him, and that men are defrauding him when they deny his assertion of innocence. Elihu feels that such sentiments are a mark of impiety and unbelief. It does not matter if Job did not quite say the things with which he is charged. If he said anything approaching it he was denying a fundamental in theology, namely, that God rewards every man according to his works.

Davidson says of verses 10-12: "Elihu's argument in these verses is the truest answer that can be given: injustice on the part of God is inconsistent with the idea of God. The three friends had urged the same plea, and Job would have accepted the argument had his friends or himself been able to take it up as a general principle and keep it clear from complications with the events of actual providence. When, however, they combined it with their theory that good and evil befell men solely according to the principle of retribution, and that this latter principle was that according to which God's actual providence was entirely administered, Job could not consent to their reasoning. And as he agrees with them that retributive righteousness was or ought to be the principle of God's rule of the world, he was obliged, as he entirely failed to perceive such a principle adhered to, to charge God with injustice."

The theory advanced by Elihu is sound as far as it goes. God is the creator and the preserver, and his will is in all things. He could have no motive for being unjust. He would not tempt any one with a view to placing him in a position where he could punish him. If God rules he must do so in justice. He is no respecter of persons; the humblest subject and the mightiest prince are treated alike. For Job to assert the contrary is for him to usurp the throne and claim the right to judge God. And a man who does that is palpably guilty of presump-

tuous sin. The weakness of the position lies in its ignorance of all the facts. It ignores a man's power to create his own temptations. It ignores the redemptive side of suffering. And this is the weakness of most of our teaching. We frame our words with painstaking care, but we do not know all the facts. We should learn to hesitate in our judgments of one another. God alone is capable of a true decision.

*Our Father, thou dost not create in order that thou mayest destroy: thou greatest because thou dost delight in thy creatures! Thou hast made us out of love. Help us to render to thee a love kindled by the vision of thy eternal love for us! Amen.*

**Sunday, 14th. Job 35.**

Job has held that the government of the world is non-moral, there is no advantage in being righteous. Elihu feels that the implication of such an idea is that Job has all the right on his side, and that God is without excuse. Both he and Job are speaking of the external profit of religion, that if a man please God he will inevitably find himself prosperous. They do not see the inwardness of life: that a man may find treasure in the darkness, that God's true riches are inward, and not outward. Elihu maintains that God is so exalted he cannot be affected one way or another by our behavior. He is neither enriched nor impoverished by what we do. We are dealt with in a manner commensurate with the nature of our acts in themselves, and not as they affect God. Men may differ among themselves, some men may be a mixture of good and bad; the point is, God is not indifferent to our acts in themselves, and he rewards us according to their quality.

There are anomalies in life. Good people seem to suffer, bad people to prosper. Why is this? Elihu says some of us simply cry because we are hurt, others cry unto God and God hears them. If God seems slow in answering it is not because he has not heard. Job continues to suffer because instead of crying to God for pardon and deliverance he rails against God as arbitrary and unjust.

Peake says: "In this speech Elihu deals with two questions, What is the profit of righteousness? and, Why does God not hear the cry of the oppressed? The former he answers on lines already laid down by Eliphaz. God is too exalted to be profited by man's righteousness or injured by his sin, therefore his retributive justice is not perverted by self-interest; accordingly the righteous will gain the due profit of their conduct. Obviously this did not at all meet Job's case. To the second question he gives a reply of his own. The oppressed cry to God from self-regarding, not from religious motives. He does not see that while this is true in certain instances, there are numerous cases, Job's among them, to which it does not apply."

*Our Father, if we have been self-centered we pray thy forgiveness! Help us to see ourselves related to others and to thy universe! Give us a sense of the majesty and beneficence of law! May we try to learn, in order that we may live in harmony with thy purposes! Amen.*

**Monday, 15th. Job 36.**

Elihu still has something to say for God, and his word is tender and beautiful. Parker says of verse 5, "Consider here the relation of terms; mighty, yet not contemptuous. This gives us the right interpretation. God is mighty, yet condescending. God could crush us, yet he spares our life. Because he is supremely mighty, he is compassionate. Half-power is dangerous, almost-mighty tempts the half-developed giant to tyrannous uses of his strength, but whole power, almightiness, omnipotence, by its very perfectness, can speak, can compassionate, can fall into the words of pity and solicitude and love. Thus justice becomes mercy, thus righteousness and peace have kissed each other. Thought to be strangers, they have hailed one another as friends and brethren. Thus the very omnipotence of God may be regarded as a gospel feature and a gospel support. If he were less powerful he would be less pitiful. It is because he knows all that strength can do, that he knows how little it can do. Strength will never convert the world, omnipotence will never subdue creation in the sense of exciting that creation to trust and worship, honor and love. What will overcome the universe of sin? Divine condescension, divine compassion, the cross of Christ!"

Job is invited to dwell on the greatness of God. The power of God reveals itself in his thought and knowledge. He despises no one however weak, he rules with goodness and wisdom. Affliction is a token of his wisdom and kindness: it is intended to teach us. God has a gracious purpose in store for Job: he is trying to allure him to a happy and prosperous life. But if so, Job must beware of frustrating the divine purpose by rebellious mourning. He would do better to extol the majesty and power of God. Let Job recognize that suffering is indispensable to the fruition of the divine blessing! He should refrain from criticism and give himself to adoration of the omnipotent power that rules over all.

*Almighty God, who art infinite in power, we praise thee that thou dost not despise the least of thy creatures! Thou hearest the young ravens when they cry, thou seest the sparrow that falls from the housetop. Teach us that thy care for us is great! May we trust, and not be afraid! Amen.*

**Tuesday, 16th. Job 37.**

Thinking of the marvelous power of God, Elihu describes the majesty of a

thunderstorm. Heavy storm clouds accumulate in the sky. The heart of them is heavy with darkness. Awful murmurings are heard, and man knows that the blackness is a veil hiding the majestic power of God; the lightning shoots forth like tongues of flame, and man is aware of the fearful goings forth of the Almighty. Equally wonderful is the tempest, before which animals and men alike are driven to shelter. That upon which Elihu dwells with greatest wonder is the clouds. They ride so majestically, they contain so much. At one time it is rain, snow or hail, at another time it is lightning. As they ride forth on their errands he sees the directing power of God. The religious appeal of nature kindles his imagination until at last he cries to Job to bend before the awful majesty of him who makes and controls the world. To think of going into the presence of the Almighty to strive with him fills him with horror. How can Job be guilty of such presumption? Men should not judge God, but fear and reverence his majesty.

Watson says of Elihu's deduction: "It is a good deduction, but Elihu has not vindicated God by showing in harmony with the noblest and finest ideas of righteousness men have, God supremely righteous, and beyond the best and noblest mercy men love, God transcendently merciful and gracious. In effect his argument has been, the Almighty must be all-righteous, and anyone is impious who criticizes life. The whole question between Job and his friends remains unsettled still. Elihu's failure is significant. It is the failure of an attempt made to bring every human problem into the line of current religious opinion."

*O God, teach us to speak of thee with bated breath! Thou art wiser than we know, and hast purposes which we cannot fathom. Help us to trust thy wisdom and thy love! Amen.*

**Wednesday, 17th. Job 38.**

Franks says that in this chapter we return to the problem of Job mentioned in chapter 31, in which Job deals with divine providence by challenging God to show the justice of his treatment of himself. Though Job never comes to understand the divine providence, yet he sees God face to face, and bows in humility before him. We may compare with the argument, "Providence is a mystery, but so is the creation," that of Butler's "Analogy," "Revelation is a mystery, but so is nature."

Job has been losing his sense of perspective. He has seen himself, and his misery has obliterated everything but his own smart and his feeling of personal outrage. He has fed himself on misery. He has discussed all the hard and unjust things in life, and in doing so has added to his pain. He has challenged God, and has accused the Almighty of hiding himself because he had nothing to say. Now Job is led away from self into nature.

Is nature so much of a riddle? Let him look at the universe and see whether its creation is a matter of caprice and arbitrary will, or whether it is all luminous with thought and purpose. Has Job ever seriously given himself to the study and observation of nature? How does he know how God made the world, or what was in his mind in the beginning? Those first acts were not dark: they were so wondrous fair that the stars began to sing. Has the sea no meaning in its ebb and flow? Are the gauzy veils of cloud hiding nothing? And what of the dawning day? Has Job heard its music? Has he discovered its significance? Does he know aught of darkness and the power that bids it begone, this luminousness that seems to lurk behind shadows and then breaks out in resistless majesty? There is the terror of the storm, the might of the east wind, the gentle dew. There are the majestic stars pursuing their ordered courses.

Job has been too self-centered: he needs to relate himself to his world. Why, if he would but explore his mental processes he would find little of caprice! The providence of the world is too widespread to allow an individual to generalize from his own sorrow. What is actually happening to Job is this, God is leading him out of himself in order that he may find himself in such a place that his vision may clarify, and he may see One who is mighty in graciousness.

*Dear Father, we thank thee for the beautiful world in which we live! Thou art ever hiding, yet ever revealing thyself in the things that charm us. May we see thy chariot in the clouds, and behold thee in the tempest! As thy works praise thee, may we join in the anthem of thanksgiving! Amen.*

**Thursday, 18th. Job 39.**

The argument becomes a little more intimate. Job is now challenged as to his real knowledge of the creatures with which his life should have made him most familiar. Some of them had been accounted his wealth, others he had met with in the fields. What wonderful creatures they are in their instincts, their strength, their adaptability, their service! Man can tame them, use them, but he cannot make them or endow them with a single faculty. Their powers have come by a different path.

Davidson says: "These brilliant pictures from the animal world have the same purpose as those given before from inanimate nature: they make God to pass before the eye of Job. They exhibit the diversity of the animal creation: the strange dissimilarity of instinct and habit in creatures outwardly familiar, the singular blending together of contradictory characteristics in the same creature, and the astonishing attributes and powers with which some of them are endowed;

and all combine to illustrate the resources of mind and breadth of thought of him who formed them and cares for them, the manifold play of an immeasurable intelligence and power in the world. Yet though each of these pictures utters the name of God with an increasing emphasis, and though the poet presents them in the first instance that we may hear this name from them, it is evident that his own eye follows each of the creatures which he describes with a delighted wonder and love."

*Our Father, forgive us our ignorance of the common objects of life! Grant us the will to learn the nature and purpose of all that we come in contact with! As the first man learned to observe and to name the things about him, so give us an understanding of natural objects and life! Amen.*

**Friday, 19th. Job 40.**

In a brief word the veil between Job and his God falls, and the glory of the Almighty shines forth. Now let Job speak! Does Job feel corrected? Or has he something he wishes to say directly to God? How can a frail man make answer to the Almighty?

Parker says: "At length God has appeared, and we have already said that the appearance of God upon the scene is itself the great answer. To have come into the action at all is to have revealed a condescension and a complacency amounting to an expression of profound and tender solicitude in regard to all that distressed and overwhelmed the life of the patriarch. If God had not spoken, his presence would have been an answer. To be assured that God draws nigh at any moment to troubled human life is to be also sure that he will see the right vindicated: he will not break the bruised reed, he will not quench the smoking flax, nor will he allow others to break or to quench what he has lovingly taken within his fatherly care."

Job feels that there is nothing to be said. Silence alone is becoming. What is the nature of Job's silence? Is it mere dogged submission to authority, or is it penitence and humility evoked by the vision of God concerning whom he has entertained such bitter resentment? Every wonder of creation has been articulate with God. And the revelation has not been given to bend Job down. Davidson says truly, the Almighty uses "the only means that will ever induce any human spirit to put itself right with God, the revelation of himself. This revelation given to Job was patient, broad and manifold. We, indeed, may feel now that the revelation might have been different, that it might have contained other traits. The traits which we desiderate could hardly, perhaps, have been exhibited on an Old Testament stage. It was not the design of the revelation to communicate new truths to Job, but to make him feel the truths which he knew, and enable him to live aright before God."

The answer of the Almighty is not ended. He who is all-wise needs to be demonstrated to be all-righteous. Job has asked, Why does not God crush wicked men, why does he not protect good men? The answer is, Could Job do it? If not, does Job really know whether God's way of handling the problem is not the best way? Job is a looker-on. He is ignorant of all the facts. He knows not the why or the wherefore of things. How does he know what God is doing or permitting in his world? Job is criticizing what he can neither help nor explain.

On verse 14, Peake says the question may relate to why God does not make a clean sweep of evil from the world. "It is not that God is more tolerant of it than men, but his hate of it makes him seem the more tolerant, for he knows that premature triumph would be defeat. Because he is so relentless he is content to be slow. The lesson to Job is that God's apparent connivance at wrong may imply a more, not a less, deadly hostility to it."

*Almighty God, thy righteousness is like the mighty mountains, thy wisdom is in all thy works! Thou art fulfilling thy purpose in all things by which we are surrounded. Give us patience to wait for thee! Amen.*

**Saturday, 20th. Job 41.**

What is the significance of the reference to behemoth and leviathan? The mention of them does not seem to enhance the force of the argument, and some scholars think either that they are out of place, or have been added to the original edition of the poem. If they are part of the speech, do they refer to actual monsters or to legendary creatures such as dragons and other beasts? In later Jewish writings they play the part of supernatural monsters, the natural enemies of God. Whatever the meaning of the passage, we Christians must remember that it was not until Jesus came and cast out demons that men had rest from their fears and terrors because of them.

On the speeches of the Almighty Davidson says: "At the end of Job's first trial the author says, 'In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God with foolishness.' At the end of the second trial Job says, 'Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?' And the author adds, 'In all this did Job not sin with his lips.' Job's reverent thought of God was such that amidst his complete darkness he let no murmur against him escape his lips. This is the idea of true religion as suggested by the suspicion of the Satan, namely, that men should cleave to God from their sense of what God himself is, though receiving nothing from his hand. The following chapters exhibit Job drifting away from this position maintained on the first incidence of his calamities, wrestling with doubts of God's righteousness, and ready to disown him, though ever

coming back to him and assured that his righteousness yet will reveal itself. It is the object of the divine speeches to bring Job back to that position which he was able to occupy at the beginning. Obviously according to the author's view of religion, this could be effected by nothing but a revelation of God, filling Job's mind with such a sense of him that he should quiet his heart before him, even amidst the intellectual darkness that remained around him. Such a revelation of God is given in the divine speeches. 'Now mine eye seeth thee.'"

*O Lord, we have said many hasty and bitter words in the days when our pain was sore: do thou have mercy on us and forgive us! Remember not against us the bitterness of our complaint! Teach us to walk with thee even in dark places! Amen.*

**Sunday, 21st. Job 42.**

On verse 5, Peake says: "The supreme lesson of the book! His previous knowledge of God was that given by the traditional theology, in which he had been trained. It left no room for the suffering of the righteous; if the righteous suffered, then the theology was false. Such an inference Job had felt forced to draw, but now he has seen God, and all is changed. He knows that God is righteous, he knows that though he suffers he is righteous also. How these apparent contradictions can be intellectually reconciled he does not know, but he and God are again at one: a deeper fellowship is possible, untroubled by misgivings as to God's moral integrity. Happy, even in his pain, that he has found himself and his God, Job would rather suffer if God willed it, than be in health and prosperity. He knows that all is well, that he and his sufferings have their place in God's inscrutable design: why should he seek to understand it? In childlike reverence he acknowledges it to be far beyond him."

In the light of his great experience Job loathes the words he had employed, bitter, unreasoning, self-centered words against God. He would retract every one of them.

Our study of the book has shown us various lessons. It has taught that the vision of God breaks down the barriers of the soul more than the weightiest arguments. It has given us an exalted view of human nature. It has shown the purifying influence of suffering. It has shown that the vision of God lifts a man out of himself and his sufferings into a consciousness of loving care and gracious purpose in all things. "Job, ignorant but trustful, is a model and a help to all who are confronted by the insoluble mystery of their own or the world's pain."

*Our God, help us to know the Scriptures and to walk in the light of their teaching! Grant us the consolation which comes from a vision of thy presence in the world! Amen.*

## PROVERBS.

**Monday, 22nd. Proverbs 1. 1-4.**

A few words must be written by way of introduction.

A careful reading shows that the title must not be considered as implying that every word in Proverbs was either written or dictated by Solomon, any more than the title "Psalms of David" means that every psalm was written by David. Just as David was considered the author of the lyrical style found in the Psalms, so Solomon was considered the originator of the form of thought and expression known as proverbs.

The first portion of this book extending through chapter 9 is a dissertation on wisdom. The second portion is probably the oldest, and may well be the portion that comes from Solomon. Kings tells us that Solomon spoke 3000 proverbs, but not that he wrote them. We know that these proverbs were carefully collected and composed, that there were schools or societies set apart for their writing, and that sometimes these writers were criticized by the prophets. We know not when the total collection was put together.

The word "Proverb" does not mean in Hebrew what it means in English. We mean a brief and pithy saying, and there are many such in this book, but there are also long discussions. The Hebrew word for proverb (mashal) is used in the Scriptures for allegory, figurative discourse, taunt, lament, argument. Some one has said, "the idea at its root is that of a similitude or a parallelism, a comparison with some well-known object; and it is, as a rule, distinguished from the other parallelisms with which we are familiar in the Bible, that of the Psalms, in that it is spoken, not intended to be sung."

We may quote a useful word by Powis Smith on Hebrew morals. "The Hebrew point of view always coupled morals with religion. They were one and inseparable. The outstanding characteristic of Hebrew religion is the fact that it gave free course to the moral forces latent within it. None of the Hebrew thinkers ever separated morals from religion. It was the moral passion of the Hebrew religion that gave it its dynamic. . . . . No moralist need apologize for the ethics of the Old Testament. Read in the light of history, the story of the Hebrew moral life is one of constantly expanding ideals, with the slow and heavy movement of the masses being constantly stimulated by the spurs of noble-minded leadership. These men of spiritual insight still point the way of moral attainment to us who would search for the same great ends."

*Our Father, we are grateful for the words thou hast spoken through men of former times! We praise thee for the word*

*spoken in Christ. We pray that we may give heed to thy word, and guard ourselves from drifting away from him who is our Saviour and Lord. Amen.*

**Tuesday, 23rd. Proverbs 1. 5-7.**

Perowne says of wisdom: "In this one word the whole subject of the book is gathered up. In the opening verses the scope and function of this wisdom are set forth. It is instruction, or rather, discipline; not only instructive, but corrective. It is discriminating, intelligent, penetrating; it discerns the words of understanding. It is practical, for it educates or disciplines in wise dealing. It is upright and just, and has regard to the severer virtues, for it trains in righteousness and judgment and equity. It sharpens the intellect, for it imparts subtilty or prudence. It adds learning (literally, acquirement,) and the art of steering one's course aright by its growth and full application. It gives play to the imagination and scope to the intellectual powers in proverb and figure, in riddles and dark sayings."

The book of Proverbs is really a book of Jewish philosophy, a philosophy which is more practical than speculative. It is a guide to daily living. Hooke says, "It assumes the correct orthodoxy: the existence of God, men's responsibility, the blessing of the righteous and the punishment of the wicked. Its general attitude is a sane, unspeculative optimism. The passion of the Psalms, the vision of the prophets, the doubts and despairs of Ecclesiastes and Job are all absent. Its negative characteristics are interesting. None of the national features of Hebrew history appear. Isaiah is not mentioned, the Law and the cultus are not referred to. Events in the political or religious history are not celebrated, Temple, priest and prophet find no place either for praise or blame. Idolatry is not once mentioned, and except for the national name of the deity, Yahweh, it would be hard to assign the book to any special Semitic people."

It is interesting to note in Jeremiah 49. 7, and Obadiah 6 that Edom is considered the source of this kind of wisdom.

Drummelow says: "The ideal of life here enjoined is by no means an unworthy one. Honesty, industry, chastity, considerateness for all, helpfulness towards the distressed, humanity, reverence, and trust towards God are urged unweariedly. There is no base or unworthy maxim. On the other hand, there are defects. Two weaknesses are especially to be noticed: first, the absence of all belief in a real life beyond the grave; secondly, there is no warm and inspiring hope of the reclamation of the foolish and sinful. If a man is on the wrong side of the line it is taken for granted he will remain there, contrary to the charity and hopefulness of him who came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

He who would enter the treasure house of life and explore its various chambers must have the key. All life belongs to God, and the very outset of the quest for wisdom or instruction is a right attitude toward God. That attitude is the "fear of the Lord": not the fear that hath torment, nor dread of his power and determination to hurt those who offend, but the reverence of a child for the character and authority of a father in whom its love centers.

*O Lord, we pray for grace to discipline our characters! Help us to give thought to the ordering of our daily lives! May we be practical in our application of thy word! Help us to live according to its precepts! Amen.*

**Wednesday, 24th. Proverbs 1. 8-19.**

The phrase "My son" indicates the way in which we are all dependent on the teacher. The world cannot progress except as provision is made for the accumulation of knowledge and the training of men to systematize and impart knowledge. On the other hand, no teacher has a right to challenge attention unless he has an apprehension of the human element in those whom he would instruct. There are elemental things in life which we all need to acquire. He is a wise man, and his calling is honorable, who can come to the inexperienced and speak kindly and helpfully the word of life.

At first sight the reference to sinners in this passage may seem strange. We know so little of the lurking highwaymen, of the organized groups of cutthroats and robbers such as infest the East, and are encountered in remote places or in badly governed regions. Anyhow we do not think ourselves likely to be tempted to become thugs. But there are refined ways of robbing. It is easy to promote bogus companies and get-rich-quick enterprizes. It is easy to trade on other people's ignorance and gullibility. It is easy to spoil people not only of money, but of virtue. The instinct of those described in this passage is not remote. The man who is greedy of gain becomes blind to the most obvious things. He cannot see the destruction that inevitably awaits everyone who outrages ordinary human instincts.

*Almighty God, we are grateful for the wisdom of the ancients, for every good and true word which has come to us out of the experience of the past! Forgive us if we have been headstrong and imagined that we could order our own steps in safety! Correct our errors and pardon our sins, for Christ's sake! Amen.*

**Thursday, 25th. Proverbs 1. 20-33.**

In the rush and turmoil of the city, in the central square from which the arteries of life radiate, wisdom stands and cries above all the Babel of sounds her note of warning

to the unwary, and to those who scoff at all laws of honor, virtue, and honesty.

Perowne says: "The scorners appear as a class of defiant and cynical free-thinkers in contrast and antagonism to the wise. The root principle of their character is a spirit of proud self-sufficiency, a contemptuous disregard for God and man. It is impossible to reform them, for they hate reproof and will not seek instruction. If they seek for wisdom they will not find it. It is folly to argue with them. They are generally detested, and in the interests of peace they must be banished from society. Divine judgments are in store for them, and their fate is a warning to the simple."

There is a third class of perverse people in every city, the great stupid, gross, unimaginative crowd. You may plead with them, and they fail to understand or to respond to your pleading. Tenderness does not move them.

The picture which begins in verse 25 is the reverse of tender. There is not recognized any difference between the man and his acts. These words are not written by an evangelist, but by a legalist. He sees nothing but desolation coming upon such callous and obstinate sinners. The law of retribution is irreversible and inescapable. "Medieval theologians taught that molten gold would be poured down the throats of the avaricious in hell, and that other vices would be punished in kind, that they might learn that by what things a man sinneth, by these he is punished." There is another saying which contains homely wisdom: "He who will not be ruled by the rudder must be ruled by the rocks." The whole passage is a warning to careless souls.

We must thank God if we know the higher truths of the gospel, but these do not obscure the certain facts of life, that avarice and its attendant vices work out a fearful vengeance on its victims. They think they are succeeding, but as a matter of fact everything is working to crush them.

*Our Father, we thank thee for thy condescension! Thou hast not left us to ourselves, but thou dost come to teach us and guide us in the way in which we should go. We thank thee for thy patience. Help us to reverence thee! Teach us to be wise! Amen.*

**Friday, 26th. Proverbs 2.**

Martin says: "It has been pointed out that in verse 1 we have a clear instance of the differences between the prophetic and the wisdom literature. In the former the prophet always regards himself as the voice of the Lord, whereas in the latter the writer speaks in his own name. The word rendered 'commandments' is used elsewhere for the moral and ritual directions of the Lord, but is here evidently used to describe the body of teaching received in the philosophical schools. The whole underlying conception is that of the wise man with the scholars."

When we are told to apply our heart to "understanding" we must understand a similar meaning to "put your brains into it." "Heart" in Hebrew means not emotion but mind, "the whole inward perceptive nature." We are to give attention, to put thought, volition, into the problem, just as a prospector for silver puts effort and search into his undertaking. We do not come to know God without effort. To know God is to know the source and nature of wisdom. When you have gained wisdom you have a sure defense against wicked men and women.

Next to the sin of avarice this book places sensuality. The only defense of a woman against a sensual man, of a man against a sensual woman, lies in a diligent resolution to know the will of God and to live in his fear. The strange woman in the ancient world was often to be found in connection with temple worship. Grotesque ideas were afloat about a person being able to keep his mind in one place or sphere even while behaving grossly with his flesh. Scripture revolts from the idea and denounces it as a pestilence. Good men live in honorable relations with one another, and with women.

Hooke says of verses 12-19: "He who possesses true wisdom in the knowledge of God will be preserved from the perverse and self-opinionated man and from the strange woman. These may be personifications, like wisdom, representing some form of foreign philosophy or heretical teaching, so the later Jewish commentators explain. But probably the reference is to literal vice. The strange woman is the professional prostitute, possibly a foreigner and connected with foreign idolatrous cults."

*Our Father, we pray that our ears may be attentive to thy word! Whether we read it, or hear it spoken, or it becomes the still small voice of the heart, may we know that thou art calling to us! Amen.*

**Saturday, 27th. Proverbs 3. 1-10.**

The word "law" is used in different senses. Here it is the accumulated experience of man. When the prophets use it they are thinking of the moral consciousness of Israel. When the priest uses it he thinks of a traditional ritual. Behind all three uses is the idea of instruction in the grounds of moral consciousness of the divine government of the world.

These verses bring out three ideas. First, a wise man will have a healthy body. Second, all his transactions will be governed by kindness and fidelity. He will find these principles safe, and a source of security. His whole reaction to life should be under their control. He will be held in respect; he will avoid mistakes. Third, he will live a life of generous benevolence. His capital will have been built up by honorable trans-

actions, his wealth will be well-gotten, and out of it he will give. To such a man health, honor, the favor of God, and prosperity will be given.

Horton says: "There is, then, a certain paradox in the life of wisdom which no ingenuity can avoid. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, but we may not seek them because they are pleasant, for other ways are pleasant too, or seem to be so for awhile. All her paths are peace, but we do not enter them to gain peace, for the peace often comes under the stress of a great conflict or in the endurance of a heavy chastening. A thousand temporal blessings accompany the entrance into the narrow way, but so far from seeking them, it is well nigh impossible to start on the way unless we lose sight and care of them altogether. The divine wisdom gives us these blessings when we no longer set our hearts on them, because while we set our hearts on them they are dangerous to us. Putting the truth in the clearest light which has been given to us, the light of our Lord Jesus Christ, we are called to give up everything in order to seek first the kingdom of heaven, and when we are absorbed in that as the true object of our search, everything is given back to us a hundredfold; we are called upon to take up our cross and follow him, and when we do so he bears the cross for us; we are called to take his yoke upon us and to learn of him, and immediately we take it—not before,—we find that it is easy. The wise, loving only wisdom, find that they have inherited glory; the fools, seeking only promotion, find that they have achieved nothing but shame."

*O Lord, let thy laws be written on the tables of our hearts! Teach us to walk in the ways of thy commandments, and if we are prone to wander, call us back to the pathway that leads to life! Amen.*

**Sunday, 28th. Proverbs 3. 11-35.**

Of verses 11, 12, Perowne says: "This short paragraph is at once in contrast and in harmony with what precedes and follows it. It states the contrast that it may introduce the harmony. The pathway of wisdom, so the rest of the chapter insists, is the pathway of temporal prosperity, but the experience of life proves that there is another side to the truth. There is, these verses say, a contradictory side, but it is so in appearance, not in reality; for to the childlike follower of wisdom the apparent exceptions and contradictions are but as passing discords and minor strains that lend force and sweetness to the overmastering harmony of love. Christian teaching itself has no better solution than this to give of the mystery of suffering, Hebrews 12. 3-13."

It does not always pay to be good if by pay you mean monetary return. Sometimes your goodness involves a loss of property, or personal liberty, or popularity. Sometimes it involves affliction. But if, on the other hand, true riches are inward, then it always pays to be good.

The chapter closes with certain practical exhortations. On verse 27 Perowne says: "This may be either a precept of honesty,—pay your just debts; or of benevolence,—you are a steward, and your wealth belongs not to you but to the poor and needy, for whose benefit you hold it."

On this central theme of trusting God with our whole being Horton says: "We do not see at first what is meant by trusting in the Lord with all our heart: we confuse it with that tepid, conventional relation with God which too frequently passes current for faith. We do not readily apprehend what is implied in acknowledging God in all our ways: we suppose it only means a general confessing and calling ourselves Christians. Consequently, many of us who believe that we trust in the Lord, yet lean habitually and confidently upon our own understanding, and are even proud of doing so; we are wise in our own eyes long after our folly has become apparent to everyone else; we resent with a vengeance of righteous indignation any imputation on the soundness of our judgment. Consequently, while we think we are acknowledging God in all our ways he does not direct our paths; indeed, we never give him an opportunity. When Jesus promised us the Spirit as an indwelling and abiding presence he clearly intimated that the Christian life should be maintained by the direct action of God upon the several faculties of the mind, stimulating the memory, quickening the perceptions of truth, as well as working on the conscience and opening the channels of prayer."

*O God, help us to walk under the guidance of thy Spirit! Restrain us from following the devices and desires of our own hearts! May we give thee the honor that is thy due! Teach us to live as stewards of our possessions! May we give all that we have to thee! Amen.*

**Monday, 29th. Proverbs 4.**

We have here a piece of autobiography. It is the picture of an only son who rises up to call the memory of a father and mother a blessed thing. They united in the task of moulding his character after a divine pattern. They created an atmosphere for his soul, an atmosphere not of money but of religion. They so informed themselves of the great principles of life that when their son came to them with his questions they were able to instruct him in the wisdom of life, and guide him to where he might find life's prize. Note that these parents did not have to refer their boy to books: they had anticipated their son's problems, and were ready to meet his confidences.

The second lesson of the chapter is on the alternate routes of life. There are but two ways or paths, the way of life and the way

of death. The way of the wise does not hem a man in as though life were a rough walk between two precipices. It gives the freedom and boldness of a man who knows his power, in place of the hesitancy and constraint of a man who is ignorant. The way of wickedness is a restless way. It cannot sleep unless it has found a victim. It is a hostile force in life, and consequently is constantly meeting enemies and being in danger of death. A good man's life is radiant, illumined with the glory of the noonday.

The third lesson is a challenge to attention. A man's heart, that is, his intellect, his volition and perception, must be called to attention. He must understand that as he thinks, so will he act. Our material and spiritual welfare spring from obedience to the divine will.

*Our Father, from whom every family in heaven and in earth is named, we praise thee for godly parents, for homes in which piety reigned, for those who taught us to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness! Help us to be to others what our parents were to us! Amen.*

**Tuesday, 30th. Proverbs 5.**

The problem of the young in ancient days was not dissimilar to that of today. The young man of the city is warned against immorality.

There are two effects of unhallowed relations between the sexes: one is physical and moral corruption, the other is a poisoned moral nature, with its attendant bitterness of jealousy. No good woman can marry a man whom she discovers to have been impure without a feeling of horror and shame. The man who ignores this fact while sowing what he calls his wild oats, will find the bitterness of life. "The evil results of relations with the strange woman will fall into three divisions: loss of wealth and position, physical deterioration, legal penalties."

Parker says: "Here is the ruin wrought not by nature, but by the perversion of nature! Here, indeed, is the problem which vexes and defies the wisdom and benevolence of the world! Man and woman were made for each other, yet what ruin is wrought by the false relations into which they are thrown! All the other evils of society are insignificant compared with the perdition created by illicit intercourse. Such a subject repels its students, for it is full of all abominableness and shame. Yet surely the Christian teacher should not be silent."

When the unfaithful man has lost his money, health and honor, then remorse and a guilty conscience begin to flog him, and through life he has the shame of weakness to torment him.

We turn from this picture to the vision of happy conjugal life, where man and woman dwell together in mutual respect; where children are born, and family life is developed,—than which there is no greater blessedness or dignity.

*Almighty God, make us pure in heart! Search us and prove us and see if there be any wicked way in us! Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts! Help us to live pure lives, honorable, true and kind! May we never forfeit the respect of man or woman! Amen.*

**Wednesday, 31st. Proverbs 6.**

There are three types of foolish men dealt with in this chapter, the gullible, the lazy, and the worthless talebearer.

The first is betrayed by his good nature. The counsel of this book would have saved thousands from misery if they had heeded it.

Never stand surety for any man, even your own brother! There are guarantee insurance companies to which he can go. When I was young I imagined I knew better than the Bible, and two or three times I stood as guarantor. Each time I paid the debt, and never got a refund. The author says if you have signed, go at once and try to get yourself released.

Horton takes a more lenient view, but his ideas are summed up as follows: "We may say perhaps that the truly moral course in these relations with our fellows lies here: if we can afford to be a surety for our neighbors, we can clearly afford to lend him the money ourselves. If we cannot afford to lend it to him, then it is weak and foolish, and may easily become wicked and criminal, to make our peace of mind dependent on the action of a third person, while in all probability it is hurtful to our friend himself, because by consenting to divide the risks with the actual creditor we tend to lessen in the debtor's mind the full realization of his indebtedness, and thus encourage him in shifty courses and unnerve his manly sense of responsibility."

The lazy man is exhorted to learn from the ant the lesson of foresight and diligence. Parker defines foresight as the making the best of our opportunities, the power of doing something for the future.

Of the naughty person he says: "The naughty person has no public friends. When his portrait is painted it is always a hideous color. The aim of the artist is to reveal the villain's ghastliness. Eyes and feet and fingers are all delineated as servants of evil, each a hired slave, each an instrument of shame. The matter, however, is not confined to the eyes and feet and fingers: the true reason is given in verse 14, 'Frowardness is in his heart.' Thus again and again we come upon the seat and spring of mischief."

*O God, teach us to set a watch upon our lips lest by word we injure our neighbor, or destroy human friendship! Restrain us from injuring others in person, property or reputation! May we learn to esteem others better than ourselves! Amen.*